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A COURSE OF LECTURES

MODERN HISTORY,

*&c.*



COURSE OF LECTURES  
MODERN HISTORY;

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

HISTORICAL ESSAYS ON THE BEGINNING OF OUR  
HISTORY, AND ON CÆSAR AND ALEXANDER.

BY

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## PREFACE.

THESE Lectures were held at Vienna, in the year 1819, by royal permission, and are now published, except a few alterations, precisely as they were delivered.

It was my first wish to place these Lectures in the hands of my hearers. To some passages, especially those which are entirely based upon special and novel researches, it would have been perhaps more appropriate to add remarks upon those topics of inquiry, which could not well be discussed in oral delivery, as well as to adduce the less known authorities. Such was at first my intention. Most of the remarks, however, would have swollen into treatises; the character of the work would thereby have become totally changed, and several years would probably have elapsed before its completion.

I believed, however, that several of those, who in Germany, or elsewhere, where the German language is known, pay attention to, and take an interest in, my labours, would prefer to have these reflections on modern times at once, and in the very form in which they now appear.

As I have for several years devoted my leisure hours almost exclusively to history,—not to general history only, but more particularly to that of my country,—I trust to have leisure and opportunity subsequently to enter more fully into many topics, that in this work I could only lightly touch upon.



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# LECTURES ON MODERN HISTORY.

## LECTURE I.

ON THE VALUE OF HISTORY, AND ON THE ORIGINAL STATE  
OF MEN IN EUROPE AND GERMANY.

THERE are three subjects which chiefly attract the attention of educated men, and occupy the leisure, which the duties of life and their social position leave them: the philosophy of life,—the enjoyment of the fine arts,—and the study of history.

All three are adapted in various ways to exalt and enrich the inward man. They are in this respect equally indispensable. Yet it is pre-eminently from the study of history, that all these endeavours after a higher mental culture derive their fixed centre and support,—viz., their common reference to man, his destinies and energies. Without a knowledge of the mighty past, the philosophy of life, however much it may enchant by wit, or transport by eloquence, will never be able to carry us beyond the limits of the present, out of the narrow circle of our customs and immediate associations. Even the higher philosophy itself, that most daring, and for that very reason, a noble aspiration of human thought, can never with impunity neglect a constant retrospection of the history of man's development and of his mental energies, as it would otherwise infallibly be entangled and lost in the unintelligible. History, on the contrary, if it does not stop at the mere enumeration of names, dates, and external facts; if it seizes on and sets forth the spirit of great times, of great men, and great events, is in itself a true philosophy, intelligible to all, and certain, and in its manifold applications the most instructive. The value of the fine arts

for all higher mental culture is acknowledged. But without the earnestness which they acquire only by their relation to the destinies and history of man, they would ever be in danger of becoming an empty pastime—a mere revel of the imagination. The meaning of the most admirable and highest productions of the plastic arts and of poetry becomes really perceptible to us, only when we can enter into the spirit of the times out of which they sprang, or which they set forth. If philosophy more immediately engages the understanding, if the fine arts occupy the feelings and the imagination, so history, on the other hand, claims the whole attention of man, and all the faculties of his soul alike; or at least it ought to do so, if it would correspond to its high destination.

Thus history, if not in itself the most brilliant, is yet the most indispensable link in that beautiful chain, which encompasses man's higher intellectual culture: and history it is which binds the others more closely together. But another and very special motive for the study of history is to be derived from the extraordinary and surprising events of the present times.\* Reflection on the mighty past,—the knowledge of it can alone enable us to take a calm steady survey of the present, to measure its greatness or its littleness, and to form a just judgment respecting it.

Thus are the simplest things generally the most exalted. History constitutes the apparently easy and first element of all instruction; and yet the more cultivated the mind of a man is, the more multiplied opportunities will he find of applying it and turning it to use, the more will he discern its richness, and divine its deeper sense. Indeed, no thinker is so profound as to be able to anticipate with accuracy the course of history, no scholar so learned as to think he has exhausted it, or has come to the bottom of it, and no sovereign so powerful that he may with impunity disregard its silent teaching.

It is a great merit of our age to have renovated the study of history, and to have cultivated it with extraordinary zeal. The English had the honour of leading the way in this noble career. The Germans have followed them with success. It would be easy to name one or two of our great historians who, at least as regards the happy combination of intel-

\* A.D. 1810.

lect, learning, and fertility of ideas, might be preferred to the most celebrated English historians. On the other hand, the merit of a more equable and finished execution is incomparably more frequent among the historians of England than of Germany. Yet the difference of taste and difference of notion respecting the art of historical narration may cause a great diversity of opinions as to the comparative value of our national and of foreign historians. It is, nevertheless, certain that we possess in the German language a rich treasure of historical research; profoundly instructive, and in part entirely new. Within the last two or three decades alone, so much has been achieved and produced in this department, that historical knowledge has been perhaps as much extended in that short space of time as formerly in as many centuries.

Despite these acquisitions, however, history on another side is still defective enough; historic truth, still here and there, veiled by many clouds of error.

That history is written with partiality is a universal complaint. In the ordinary and literal sense this complaint ought not to be made, if we survey history from a lofty point of view. If, in his narrative, a writer of history has in view merely the advantage of some individual state, or some other special political object, and not the general interests of mankind and the progress of human destinies, in that case he may be, perhaps, a skilful advocate, an able orator, a distinguished political writer, but by no means is he an historian. But if a genuine historian sets before us facts, as they are, without falsification, and with the strictest conscientiousness,—for so he is required, and so it is self-evident he ought to do,—and if with respect to his views and opinions,—without which it is impossible to write history, or at least a lively historic narrative, he frankly states the principles of belief and right which determine his views and opinions, then we cannot complain with justice, for he himself furnishes us with the means of easily ascertaining how far we can agree with him or not. Of partiality we ought not to accuse him, even if we should differ from him in opinion; or at least the word has then no longer any very reprehensible sense. In general it is in history as in life itself, where it may often be more praiseworthy to choose and join the right party, than to remain without any party, ever neutral and indifferent. The example of a great

Roman writer will best serve to illustrate my meaning. Tacitus opens his two immortal works, of different tendency, with the same assertion, that they were written without hate as without love. In this, perhaps, he only alluded to his own personal relations under this or that particular emperor, which might indeed more readily occur to his contemporaries. But if his expressions were to be taken strictly, we should then do him an injustice. For it is precisely the high moral hate, everywhere glowing through his pages, and the exalted love visible in them; the hate, namely, of unrighteous despotism and degrading vice, and the decided watchful love for everything high-minded, for everything worthy of better times; these things it is that render his works immortal, that have given them an imperishable value for all ages. Not impartial is Tacitus—this any one, without intellect or love, can easily be. No! he is in the highest degree partial, but his partiality is for the right party, and expressed in a just and noble manner.

Far more than by this much-dreaded partiality of writers, if such it can be called, is history falsified, and that is, by a partiality of quite a different kind, which is in fact a defect of sensibility,—a narrowness of mind. It is exceedingly difficult for man to tear himself from the circle of his habits. These habits, the whole present, our own age, with all its invisible associations, form a kind of spiritual atmosphere around us, which necessarily wraps the forms of the past as in a mist. Hence the many erroneous, or rather feeble, inaccurate, spiritless views and judgments on great times that have passed away,—on men and deeds which exceed the habitual standard.

To remove obstructive views of this kind, to bring the past, its heroes and its deeds, before our eyes, in their true forms, and in their full force, shall now be my chief endeavour.

To sketch a faithful picture of the last few centuries, so eventful and remarkable, we must go back to the middle ages, and to the earlier history of Germany. The migration of the northern nations is the wall of separation that divides the ancient and the modern world. The institutions, laws, and customs of the latter, down to our own times, are founded on the primitive constitution of the Germans; and we must place before our eyes what Europe was before

and after the Crusades, in order to judge what effect the discovery of the two Indies might have had upon her whole social system, and what effect it actually had. A short sketch, therefore, of the ancient Germans, and a compressed account of the middle ages, will precede our reflections on modern history.

We shall begin with the great migration of the northern nations, an event, equally astonishing in itself, as immeasurable in its consequences. Astonishing—for never, perhaps, did a state of things,—so utterly desolate and hopeless.—a prostration and humiliation so universal—such a subjugation of everything good, afflict the whole civilized world, as in the latter times of the declining empire of Rome! Yet deliverance arrived in a manner the most unexpected. The world became impregnated with a new vital force, and countries which had been formerly civilized flourished anew, if not more civilized, yet certainly freer, happier, and nobler, than they were, even in the better times of antiquity. Other lands and nations,—less favoured by nature, that had hitherto existed in poverty and simplicity, although in a state of freedom,—quickly rivalled in blooming prosperity, and in the cultivation of the arts, the more fortunate south. Immeasurable were the consequences of this migration of nations for the whole of modern history; all that has been developed during the last fifteen hundred years by the noble rivalry of so many and such great national energies, has thereby alone been brought about. Had this migration not taken place; had the Germanic nations not succeeded in throwing off the Roman yoke; had, on the contrary, the rest of northern Europe been incorporated with Rome, had the freedom and individuality of the nations been here too destroyed, and had they been all transformed with like uniformity into provinces, then would that noble rivalry, that rich development of the human mind, which distinguishes modern nations, have never taken place. And yet it is precisely this rich variety, this manifoldness, that makes Europe what it is, that confers on it the distinction of being the chief seat of all human civilization. Instead of a Europe, thus free and richly diversified, there would then have been but one Rome, wherein all things would have been melted down and dissolved; and where, instead of the rich

variety of European history, the annals of the single Roman empire would have presented us with a counterpart to the dull monotony of the Chinese year-books. Who would not prefer a state of simplicity and free nature to such a Chinese civilization, founded upon universal abasement?

This migration of the northern nations is nothing else save the history of the wars between the free Germanic races and the Roman masters of the world; wars which terminated in the dissolution of the Roman empire, and in the foundation and first formation of the modern states and nations. A retrospective survey of the methods whereby the Romans attained to universal dominion, as well as of the genius of decay, which from an early period lurked in that Roman empire; a sketch of the peculiarities in the Germanic race and mind, in their manners and their constitution; and finally, a rapid glance at the wars between the Romans and the Germans,—both before and after that Arminius, who with unshaken perseverance and self-devotion, maintained German independence,—these are the most essential points for a clear view of this great historical event.

Let us first cast a glance at the primitive state of the whole of Europe. It is a remarkable and attractive spectacle to contemplate men who were so richly endowed by nature, and gifted with such noble faculties, in a state so totally different from that to which we are accustomed. Before the passion for universal dominion had been transmitted from Asia to the Greeks, and had next taken possession of the Romans, the state of Europe was, on the whole, nearly everywhere the same. The rudiments of civilization were already known; agriculture was general; and some countries were proportionately thickly peopled. Towns were numerous, but there were likewise almost as many individual petty states as considerable towns. Everything was, for the most part, isolated and unconnected. Europe was inhabited and peopled chiefly by three or four great nations; but none of these were united among themselves so as to form a whole. Each of them were split into numberless petty tribes and races, constituting as many distinct states. Each of these tribes had but a slender knowledge of the remoter ones, and often carried on war with the adjoining. But as war was waged with such isolated forces, and not in great masses as it is

among powerful states in a higher stage of civilization, it was hence less destructive than among the latter, and served but to develope and exercise courage and other martial and manly qualities.

With many important differences of detail, the faith and worship of these nations rested on one common basis. Their faith was an adoration of nature, her most glorious phenomena, and her hidden primal energies and mysteries. The sun and the stars, fire, the sea, and the elements; the mother earth herself, awful mountains, sacred groves and springs, were the objects of this nature-worship, mingled as it was with traditions and fables of ancient heroes, and concerning the earlier state of the earth and men. Many, indeed most of the conveniences and arts of life that have now become habitual to us, were then still unknown to the German, especially in the north. On the other hand, a deep and strong love for nature filled his breast with a joyous energy of life, whose sources are only too often dried up in the relations of more artificial society. Necessitous as the condition of these ancient nations may appear to us, they yet almost universally possessed one great good, which we have for the most part been obliged to sacrifice for other advantages,—freedom, to wit. It was fostered and maintained by their isolation and universal subdivision into petty states and tribes. This original freedom must be considered the decided characteristic of Europe as contrasted with Asia. In Asia we find from the very beginning great masses of states, and nations, and universal sovereignty; in Europe everything was originally isolated; there was, for that very reason, a constant mutual rivalry, and each state developed itself in individual freedom. Asia may be called the land of unity, in which everything has been unfolded in great masses, and in the simplest relations: Europe is the land of freedom, that is, of civilization through the antagonism of manifold individual and isolated energies. This variety has been at all times the characteristic of European civilization; for even after great states and nations had sprung up within it, the essential qualities of that original character remained. It has often been the unhappy consequence of excessive subdivision, that although it has been favourable to freedom, yet, national unity, in spite of the efforts to attain it, could not be realized. This was the



case among the Greeks, and in a great measure also among the Germans. Nature herself had adapted Europe to this state of subdivision, by the many great and smaller sections into which European countries are divided by means of mountains and seas. The circumstance that Europe was peopled from Asia,—that all old European nations were originally Asiatic emigrants,—may also have been favourable to freedom. Colonies and emigrant tribes are ever prone thereto; the bonds of habit are left behind in the mother-country, and the original condition of society is restored. This rule held good in the most ancient times, precisely as it has been evinced in the most recent.

The remarks we have made upon the state of Europe in general, are peculiarly applicable to that of the Greek nation. In the earlier times it was divided into numberless petty states and tribes, which were connected only by their common origin, language, and mythology. It was only in consequence of the Persian invasions, that large states began to be formed in Greece, and ambition to take a bolder flight. For when, by the utmost exertion of all their energies and courage, the Greeks had successfully maintained their independence against superior force, the necessity of union was felt, and the smaller states rallied around two of the most considerable. But precisely because there were two, was the germ of jealousy and of internal discord already laid. Thus Sparta and Athens speedily became the centres of two parties, that were spread over the whole of Greece, and were animated with quite opposite principles. Sparta, agreeably to its nature as a land-power, was more favourable to the nobility, and became the head of the aristocratic party. Athens, being a commercial state, and therefore more inclined to the class of burghesses and to civic freedom, became the centre of the democratic party. How the Greeks themselves destroyed their own national strength in this grand struggle between Athens and Sparta, between aristocracy and democracy, this, as portrayed by the great historians of antiquity, is even still one of the most instructive historic pictures. The Greek nation, as a nation, perished utterly through this mutual destruction of its two mightiest and most distinguished races. Only here and there did a spark appear among the ashes, and but once again, in Alexander the Great, did Grecian energy burst

forth into a brilliant flame, to be once more speedily extinguished. If it can be averred of any conqueror of the ancient world, that he had the power and the will not merely to destroy, but also to build up and found anew,—that he had original, bold, and great ideas,—it may be averred of Alexander; and in these ideas he was passionately enthusiastic, not coolly calculating, like Cæsar. It may be asked, whether the consequences to the world would not have been greater and more lasting, if Alexander, as his teacher Aristotle wished, and more than once expressed the wish, had confined himself to Europe, instead of seeking Eastern conquests,—if he had wholly subjugated the Greeks, and thereby moulded them into one nation, under a monarchy founded upon legal freedom? If in this manner, during their flourishing period, they had been cemented into a mighty whole, into one nation, which indeed they never were, the Greeks would have presented a noble spectacle to the world and to history. But at that time such a scheme would have been scarcely practicable. They were too divided, already thoroughly corrupted, and all their energies extinct. In that case, the probable reward of Alexander would have been failure and ingratitude. Be that, however, as it may, an irresistible impulse urged Alexander towards Asia. The municipal character of the constitution and social system of the Greeks, their petty spirit of contention, and their over-refinement, may have appeared too narrow and contracted to his great mind. A decided predilection for Oriental grandeur breaks out through his whole life, and was made matter of reproach against him by the more narrow-minded of the Greeks. It may, perhaps, have been his leading idea to wish to fuse together Oriental greatness and Grecian refinement, and combine in a perfect social and political system the respective advantages of Europe and Asia. On his death, however, the incoherent elements were again disjoined, and the whole structure fell to pieces. Among the several Græco-Macedonian kingdoms that were now formed in Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor, and Greece, relations speedily arose that bear a striking resemblance to certain epochs in modern history. Standing armies, treaties that were concluded or altered with as much display of the arts of diplomacy as ever modern times have known,—in one word, a recognised system of the balance of power.

This produced the same consequences at that period, as in the sequel it has produced in every age, and always will produce. Perpetual wars,—namely, because the scales of the artificial balance never stand altogether motionless, but ever incline towards one side, or at least appear so to do,—and after such perpetual wars, mutual exhaustion and general disorganization. That one might not become too powerful, these Grecian states enfeebled each other so much, that at last they were all weak enough to be easily conquered by a new and unlooked-for power.

This destiny had Rome in the meanwhile been growing up to fulfil. With a population, with manners, laws, and customs derived from the different nations that peopled central Italy, Rome, surrounded as she was by several powerful states, was necessitated, even from her origin, to carry on war, in order to defend herself, and to preserve the territories she had wrested from the latter. The cause of this ceaseless succession of wars lay in the Roman constitution itself. Indescribably severe was the oppression exercised on the people by the nobility. The people, moreover, were ever restless; but the means of warding off danger, when once war had become a habit, were always at hand. War had need only be perpetuated; patricians and plebeians alike loved it; but the patricians gained by it the most surely; and now and then, by allowing the people to share in some of its advantages, any pressing danger would be easily averted, and the storm be once more laid. When in respect of her claims in Sicily and Spain, her growing aggrandizement had brought Rome in contact with Carthage, the powers she had long been gathering together were suddenly developed to an extent of greatness, that amazed the contemporary world, as it has done all succeeding ages. The struggle with Carthage, on which the very existence of Rome was staked, which called forth her highest efforts, and which brought her to the verge of destruction: this struggle it was that imparted to her that loftiness of spirit; that magnanimity which continued to exist even in subsequent times. This greatness and magnanimity, portrayed as they are by eloquent historians, only too often lead us to forget much in the history of Rome, and in her dealings with the rest of the world, but which, viewed with the eye of humanity, cannot appear otherwise

than both reprehensible and pernicious. Now had the power of Rome become irresistible; and it was easy for the Romans to put an end to the game of the balance of power among the Grecian states and kingdoms. At first interfering with dignity and apparent love of justice, they quickly began to assume a bolder tone, and at last dropping the mask, and throwing aside all reserve, they announced and assigned to the subjugated nations their long decided lot.

Harder was their task to subdue, or rather to extirpate, the nations of western and northern Europe. The warlike inhabitants of Spain, as well as the Celtic nations, were at length almost wholly subjugated; and so were even several Germanic tribes. But among the latter the national strength was by no means crushed; by them mankind was shortly to be saved, for Rome was now hurrying with rapid steps, to her inevitable downfall. It was no longer the patrician order, but powerful individuals aiming at sovereignty, who, in these latter times, promoted warfare, and used devastated provinces, or half-exterminated nations, as means for amassing wealth, and as instruments of their ambition. Through the strife of parties, the establishment of despotism, the inevitable result of anarchic freedom in any state, was already at hand, when the ever-memorable contest between Rome and the Germanic nations broke out. Thus had this malady—the lust of power, the thirst after universal dominion—spread and been transplanted from Asia constantly westward, and at last taken deep root in the midst of Europe.

Let us now cast a glance at the state of northern Europe. Three great and distinct races dwelt in central and northern Europe. The Celts inhabited upper Italy, the Alps, the whole of central France, a part of Spain, and the British isles. The Germans occupied Germany and the Scandinavian kingdoms; for at that time the Suiones or Swedes, and the other inhabitants of those northern states, were accounted Germans, and constituted one people with them. It was not till long afterwards that the German language and nation, properly so called, took a peculiar development, and became distinct from the kindred Scandinavian race and language in Denmark and Sweden. One-third of Gaul, the north-western part, under the name of Belgium, was peopled not by Celts alone, but partly by tribes, either purely Germanic, or of the two races, mixed. The earliest European seats of the Germanic nations

were in the northern parts of Germany, in the Netherlands, Denmark, the south of Sweden and Norway, along the coasts of the Baltic, and also towards the west on those of the Atlantic. At a later period only did central and southern Germany become generally cultivated, and inhabited principally by Germans. By reason of its effects, this circumstance is of great importance. The Celts were the first who occupied the Alps, and perhaps many districts also between those mountains and the Danube; German tribes may subsequently have mingled among them, and hence Roman authors speak of semi-Germanic tribes upon the Alps. But it was only when a great German nation, the Suabians, and the Swiss, who were akin to them, migrated from the more northern districts, and from the coasts of the Baltic to their present seats, that the country between the Rhine, the Danube, and the Alps, as well as a part of the latter, became wholly German. That on the lower Danube, in the north of Greece and up to the Carpathian mountains, Celtic, and perhaps even German tribes, also existed, is probable. Some of the latter, as appears by certain names, and by other circumstances, were intermingled with the Gauls, who from this quarter once penetrated into Greece, and ultimately settled in Asia Minor.

The eastern neighbours of the Germans were, two thousand years ago, as at the present day, the wide-spread Slavonic nations. The Romans, who were really acquainted only with the western and southern frontier-districts of Germany, and knew little or nothing of the interior, are uncertain in their assignment of boundaries between the two. As to some of these Eastern people, the writer who had most knowledge of Germany says, he was unable to decide whether they were Germans or Sarmatians. Perhaps from the Oder to the Vistula, or even still more easterly as far as modern Livonia and Lithuania, German and Slavonian, as well as other tribes, dwelled together. They were not intermixed, however, but lived side by side, in the same manner as in Hungary and the Turkish empire, several nations of totally different language and origin, have done for centuries, without being blended; each preserving its peculiar language and customs. Even at that early period, varied intercourse and manifold relations seem to have existed between the Germanic and Slavonian nations.

This is the more probable, as in the principal expeditions of the Germans during the time of the Goths, we find many non-Germanic tribes associated with them, of whom some probably, and others most certainly, were of the Slavonic race.

Thus of the above-named three great nations, the Germans, of whom we are at present more immediately treating, possessed the most northern seats. It even seems as though they had designedly penetrated as far as possible towards the north. Now if the existence of widely-spread species of domesticated animals originally indigenous to Asia; if the manners and customs, the mythology, the universal traditions, and, above all, the languages of the European nations, incontrovertibly prove that they had all, earlier or later, immigrated from Asia; then the question may well be asked: what could have possibly induced the Germanic nation to abandon their happier dwelling-places, and to seek an abode in the rude, extreme north? It was undoubtedly not necessity alone. At that time, the earth was not so thickly peopled, as to leave no room for choice; and it would not have been difficult for them to find settlements elsewhere. We must, perhaps, seek the reason of this singular phenomenon in the sentiments and sagas of antiquity. Though an altogether satisfactory reply to the question can scarcely be expected, yet it is at least note-worthy, that the Indians, precisely the most southern Asiatic people, transfer the most glorious and perfect region of the earth,—the terrestrial paradise,—which we generally look for in the south, to the extreme north. They conceive it to be in the form of a vast mountain, and to be the seat of every kind of wealth. To have climbed and conquered this wonderful mountain, is one of the highest adventures fabled of their gods or deified heroes. Hence have some English scholars gone so far as to seek the derivation of the name Scandinavia from Scanda, one of those Indian deified heroes, to whom that adventure is ascribed. Hazardous and inadmissible as this supposition may appear, it is yet certain that the key to the earliest events in the history of nations, is not to be sought for in what we call policy, nor even in physical necessities alone, which are apt more immediately to occur to us, but much rather in their mythology, that is, in their perhaps incorrect and vague, but still poetical conceptions and sagas. Strange as these may appear to us at the first

glance, still upon the minds of these primitive men they exercised a marvellously powerful influence.

Thus much as to the situation of the Germans between their eastern and western neighbours. We have already ventured to cast a passing glance at their early origin and first migrations; but the territory they possessed in Europe by reason of its great influence on the national character, is also well worthy of our attentive consideration. In despite of her northern situation, Germany has many and great advantages. She possesses in fullest measure that first condition of all fertility in a country,—a rich abundance of great and small rivers, intersecting her on every side. In this first and most important quality of a fruitful and lovely region, she surpasses many other European lands, and equals the most favoured. Even the great plains and flats, that stretch towards the sea on the coasts of the North Sea and the Baltic, are in part fruitful, and only a few tracts are rendered waste and barren by the sand. At the period we are speaking of, however, the fertility of the German soil, which in later times has made Germany a flourishing and proportionately a very populous country, was by no means developed by careful husbandry. Another peculiarity, too, had even then the greatest influence on the national mind and disposition. Its elevated situation, and numberless mountains, distinguish this country from those immediately adjacent on the north-east and south-west; namely, France and Poland, which lie incomparably lower. The lofty Alps in the south, the Riesengebirge towards the east, towards the west the mountains of the Vosges in Alsace; then the mountains of Treves along the Moselle: on this side the Rhine the heights of the Black Forest, the mountains of the middle Rhine and in the Wetterau, which on the one side towards the sea gradually sink down, and on the other, to the north, unite with the Harz mountains; all these make our old Germany a land universally girdled and interwoven with mountains of the most varied elevation and nature. In this respect, indeed, within Europe, she can only be compared with Spain.

The internal treasures of these mountains (and they are very considerable) were not brought to light before the discovery of America. But the greater was the wealth of living feelings,—enthusiastic, strong, and joyous,—which the sublime

aspect of nature in their land called forth and preserved ever fresh in the breast of the German nations. The power exercised by nature and her outward forms over men is incomparably greater than is commonly supposed, even in the state of artificial civilization; and still more mighty is it in that condition of primitive simplicity, when man himself stands in a nearer relation to nature, and has therefore a deeper, more inward feeling for her. What impression, indeed, can a plain, however fertile, make upon the soul? none, but that of fertility. There is nothing there to lead the mind away from thoughts on the labours and earnings of men, to elevate it above the sphere of vulgar wants. It in fact only raises suggestions as to the products of the soil, and the abundance and the degree of perfection which they attain to. How totally different is the impression made upon the soul by elevated mountainous regions?

Nature there stands visible before us, as it were, in all her majesty; in the presence of these rocks, the speaking monuments of her greatness, the primitive fragments of antecedent creations, our views become expanded and exalted; we are led back to the thousands of years that have gone before us; self, and everything petty and narrow, disappear. A similar impression to that made by beautiful mountain-scenery, is produced by lofty, primeval forests, little touched by the hand of man, where oaks of a thousand years, (as in Germany, according to the description of the elder Pliny,) form, with their clustering and intertwining roots and boughs, high arches, galleries, and figures, strangely like to the daring constructions of human art, but only grander, more life-like, and freer, as if raised for a great temple of nature.

Individual Romans were not wanting, as is proved by the passage referred to in Pliny, in taste for the high natural beauties of the German land; in general, however, they portray the north as very rugged. So it may be even now called, in comparison with Italy; but the expressions of the Romans, and their descriptions of Germany, are too disproportionate and exaggerated for the real and present condition of the country. The question has been raised whether Germany was not formerly colder, whether the climate has not to some extent been modified by the more perfect cultivation of the soil. As to central and southern Germany, the question



may be answered in the affirmative. This whole tract was undoubtedly much ruder and much colder, as nearly its entire extent was covered over by one great continuous forest, single remnants of which we still see in the Black Forest, the Spesshart, the Harz, and the Thuringian and Bohemian forests. That the lower northern districts of Germany, however, lying nearer to the sea, were formerly colder than now, we have no reason whatever to assume. On the contrary, putting aside the particular causes, arising from larger forests, and from still greater number and mass of lakes and watery hollows, naturalists incline to the opinion as the most probable, that the earth is growing gradually, although slowly, colder. Within historical times, the frozen ocean has increased towards the south; in northern countries and on mountain summits, traces of a flourishing vegetation, belonging to a period of time not very remote, are still to be found, where such will no longer thrive. Northern Germany, therefore, and the Danish and Swedish coasts, were certainly not colder than at present, and were, perhaps, even warmer.

Now this deep and strong love for nature, which the primitive Germans inhaled with the native air of their mountains and their woods, is the peculiar characteristic of the Germanic character, and has ever adhered to the Germanic nations in all ages and in all countries. Wherever in the progress of time they fixed their dwelling-places, whether in the southern fields of Spain and Italy, or in northern England, everywhere they dwelt and built after the same fashion, choosing their abodes not so much for the sake of convenience or utility, as from that love for free nature and her enchanting beauty which had become to them an absolute want. Upon the hills, on the steep declivities of rocks, near the headlong mountain-torrent, in the solitary wooded valley, they most loved to fix their dwelling. This love of nature is visible in the whole way of life, in the divine worship, in the faith, ay, even in the very constitution of the primitive Germans. In all productions of later and more civilized times, it will reveal its dominant influence, and give them their peculiar German stamp. It is still living in our language and poetry; and should this love of nature ever become wholly extinct among the Germans, it would only be a proof that the Germanic character had utterly changed, or that it had even ceased to be.

Passing from the geographical nature of the country, we come to the most important point of all for our object,—the constitution of the primitive Germans. Before I attempt to portray it, I must refute a very common, but incorrect opinion. The primitive Germans are but too often described as mere savages. Some much-read authors are particularly fond of comparing them with the American Indians; with those savages, who on the first discovery of the new world, were not even acquainted with the use of iron; of whom many tribes were, and even still are, cannibals, and many others stand on the lowest scale of human nature, but just raised above the brute. Such false comparisons and exaggerated representations arise from historians starting with preconceived opinions, and still oftener from want of distinct ideas. In this case in particular, distinct ideas have been wanting as to the savage and civilized states. The essential points that concern us here are the following. It is chiefly by three great instruments and inventions that a people still living in the simplest social condition is rendered capable of civilization, and is raised to a higher grade: iron, the indispensable instrument of husbandry, and the first beginning of all art; money, the invisible bond between all civilized nations, however remote; and alphabetical writing, which places existing generations in communion with the past and the future. How these three great discoveries, very closely connected as they are with each other,—the artificial use of iron, the acknowledgment of the value and unanimity as to the universal currency of the precious metals, and the introduction of alphabetical writing,—how these arose among men, and how men came by them, that is an inquiry that would lead us very far. Let it suffice that we find these three great instruments and levers of human life, a little sooner or later, somewhat more or less perfectly developed, but yet universally disseminated, among all nations of Asiatic origin. The American savages, on the contrary, upon the discovery of the new world, were wholly destitute of them. It is self-evident, that with these great primary instruments were conferred the rudiments and first germ for all further progress in civilization, which then, slowly perhaps, but yet almost naturally and necessarily, must follow. Whether a people, acquainted with and possessing iron, money, and the art of writing, and yet living, as

did the primitive Germans, in a state of manners, and under institutions very simple and natural, can be appropriately termed savages, is not worth disputing, as, after all, names are arbitrary. This, however, is certain, that nations, which possess iron, money, and the art of writing, are separated by an immeasurable gulf from those unacquainted with these things, and that we might almost say they form two totally different species of men, so infinitely great and so all-pervading is the influence of these first of all discoveries. Hence the comparison of the primitive Germans with the American savages is peculiarly unfitting. Like the other northern nations, the Germans were acquainted with those rudiments of all higher civilized and social life. They possessed the lance, the sword, and the plough; the riches of their native mountains, it is true, were as yet unknown, and hence iron was rare and costly. Not every warrior had his coat of mail and helmet; the shield was usually of interwoven osiers only; while copper and stone, in some weapons, such as battle-axes, were substituted for iron. In their description of the German order of battle, the Romans tell us, that while the front ranks indeed were sufficiently provided with effective lances, the rear ranks were armed only with wooden javelins hardened in the fire. Iron weapons, moreover, were one of the objects most eagerly sought for by the Germans in their commercial dealings with the Romans; not, because they themselves did not understand the forging of arms from metals, but by reason of the rarity of iron. The thing itself, and not its greater or less extension, concerns us here. Even with the sword and plough alone a totally new form and system of life are introduced; further refinement and perfection in the art of iron, as civilization may be called, spring up of themselves in time. In this respect, perhaps, the various northern and Germanic tribes were not equally advanced. In the history of the Cimbri and Teutones, the Romans speak of a host of fifteen thousand horsemen fully equipped, and armed with coat of mail, helmet, and shield. They may possibly, from vanity, have exaggerated the number, but there is scarcely an imaginable reason for supposing them to have invented an armament of the kind for that army contrary to the truth. As these nations belonged to the interior and northerly part of Germany, nearer to the coast of the Baltic, it is possible, that there,

from the intercourse of the inhabitants with Sweden, which abounded in iron, this metal was not so rare, as in the western Rhine frontier of Germany, which the Romans, in the descriptions they give us, have almost exclusively in view.

From misunderstanding a passage in Tacitus, some have denied that the Germans were acquainted with the art of writing. It has, however, been incontrovertibly demonstrated, that the Scandinavian nations possessed a peculiar alphabet, in the Runic character, and it is equally certain, that several other Germanic races also originally used it. We may hence infer that the case was the same with the remainder; that writing was not so much in use as among the Romans or as in modern times, needs no comment, and if among one or two frontier-tribes, whose organization was wholly military, little or no traces of the art can be discerned, from that circumstance also no inference as to the whole nation can be drawn. In the same manner we may readily admit, that not only among the Germanic, but among all northern nations, money was rare; that most of them did not coin for themselves, but were content to use foreign coin.

But to assume that they were altogether unacquainted with the value of money, would be repugnant to the whole history of ancient commerce, which even in very early times spread from the Black Sea, along the rivers that flow into it, far into the innermost north. If the Germans, especially in their dealings with Roman traders, often preferred bartering wares to taking money, they were actuated by the same motive as in preferring the older coins, namely, the fear of being cheated in the value of the newer ones, which were often lighter, and with which, at all events, they were less familiar. We must in general be careful to remember that the ancient authors, in their descriptions of the Germans, were only too fond of contrasting the simplicity of this life of nature with the corrupt manners of degenerate Rome. Thus, when they speak of the repugnance of the primitive Germans to enclosed dwelling-places and towns, we must not take this literally, as if no towns at all existed among them, but merely thereby understand their greater rarity. For the most part, indeed, each house was erected singly; even their congregation in villages did not then take place as in modern times. The Romans themselves, notwithstanding, speak of German forts, that

were strong enough to necessitate a siege; such as that in which Arminius besieged his father-in-law Segest, with whom he was at war. They refer to many places, which, from the whole context, are clearly seen to be towns; one of the ancient geographers even gives a long list of Germanic towns. It is not always possible now to determine the precise site of these towns, nor to establish in detail the credibility of all such accounts; yet on the whole, the matter is the more remarkable, as these accounts are known to have been derived from the reports of traders who carried on commerce with the interior northern parts of Germany. This is a confirmation of what many other proofs render probable, that the interior of Germany, unknown as it was to the Romans, may have been infinitely more civilized than the frontier tribes, whose organization was altogether military. With these almost exclusively were the Romans acquainted, and after them they drew their picture of the whole nation.

Hence in the contrasts between Germanic simplicity and Roman corruption, which the ancient writers are so fond of, we cannot take every word literally; we must make allowance for rhetorical antitheses and expressions. With moderns, on the other hand, filled with a preconceived idea of Germanic barbarism, it is not uncommon to portray things in a manner absolutely repugnant to the most distinct accounts of the ancients. Thus painters and sculptors, when they take their subjects from the early history of Germany, are in the habit of presenting us with half-naked figures enveloped in the undressed skins of animals. This is not accordant with the descriptions of the ancients.

The primitive Germans were clad in furs and linen; it was not till later, that they became acquainted with cloth, and learned to manufacture it; cotton fabrics were not at that time generally used even by southern nations, and silk was still less known. The manufacture of linen was already so widely spread and perfected in primitive Germany, that it formed a staple article of its trade. The white garment of the women, which left the neck and in great part the arm uncovered, was ornamented with a purple stripe. Besides a close fitting under-garment covering the whole body, the men were attired, not in undressed skins of animals, but in fur dresses. This we learn from the circumstance, related by the

historians, that among the rich this dress was ornamented with narrow strips made from the expensive skins of rare animals found in the extreme north. Painters and sculptors, therefore, should not distort the simplicity of this costume, primitive as it may be, into a caricature of repulsive rudeness, nor represent German princes and heroes, if they must do so at all, as the Kamschatkans are portrayed to us in books of travels.

The barbarous custom, habitual among almost all savage nations, of burning or cutting in upon the face or body all sorts of strange and terrific figures, and the finding a certain beauty, grace, and dignity in such disfigurement, were ever unknown to the Germans. Their simple ornament consisted, especially among the women, in giving a fair colour to the hair by artificial means, if they had it not from Nature. With the men, their arms were the object most prized; their shields were blazoned with various symbols, the houses also were painted with the liveliest colours. The helmet, too, whenever any could afford one, was decorated with ornaments, and a buck's horn silver-mounted, and converted into a drinking-cup, was, as a trophy of the chase, prized higher than if it had been made entirely of silver.

The ancient historians thought it worth while to preserve these slight traits of a remarkable people, and I have here endeavoured to collect them into one picture.

## LECTURES II. & III.

### ON THE GERMANS.

TOGETHER with the perfection of the useful arts, there is one thing decisive as to the higher or lower degree of culture of ancient and simple nations; namely, their poetry. What is not poetry—what does it not contain for such races living in closer communion with nature? It contains their history, their faith, the sum of their limited knowledge, their whole view of this world and the next. It is the joy and soul of their life, the universal mind of a whole generation. Hence it is to be regarded as a great advance in historical science, that we have begun in recent times thoroughly to combine the exami-

nation of poetical monuments, those of the older periods especially, close to the heroic age, with historical investigations, and to consider poetry as one of the sources, whence a knowledge of times and nations is derived. What important aid poetry may lend men in ascertaining the degree of civilization that existed among a people, is best illustrated by an example that very readily suggests itself. We are to this very day delighted with the lovely simplicity and lofty beauty of the Homeric poems. Now should we ask ourselves how, at the time these poems were composed, the Greeks stood in comparison with the other nations with whom they chiefly came in contact, we shall at once perceive that the Phœnicians, for instance, far excelled them, in navigation, in commerce, in the useful arts, and generally in the industry of towns; in all these respects the Greeks were far below the Phœnicians. But should we on that account place the Greeks of that epoch, who were capable of producing such noble poems, as well as of enjoying them, absolutely below the Phœnicians? Undoubtedly not! What is culture, emphatically, but mind, the mobility, activity, and development of mind and of all the mental energies? The useful arts are something admirable, something grand, when directed by mind and applied to noble objects; but in an unspiritual employment of all these material arts, it may well be doubted whether they serve more to benefit or injure the human race. Mind is the thing of first importance, and that is best represented to us by the poetry of a people.

In these descriptions, the Romans are never tired of expatiating on the poetry of the Germans, on their songs, and on the influence of these upon life. Even in battle the war song was chanted; during the whole strife the memory of former heroes was celebrated, and everything added that could instil into fresh deeds of heroism. The songs, indeed, have passed away, in which Arminius, misunderstood and rewarded with ingratitude in life, was at least glorified after death. We may, however, be enabled to form a notion of the nature of these Germanic songs, and of their influence upon life, by considering what it was, besides the commemoration of heroes and their deeds, that constituted the subject-matter of them; representations, namely, of the gods and the mode of worshipping them. But these are the very things which best characterize the mind and condition of a nation.

Of the religion of the Germans the Romans tell us very little, yet that little is remarkable. It was, like the faith and worship of all primitive people, an adoration of Nature, her grand phenomena and marvellous powers. But the religious system of the Germans was simpler, more connected with an immediate, exalted love of nature, than among the southern nations, less adorned with fables than among the Greeks, not so overlaid with ceremonies as among the Romans, altogether less sensual than among either.

Like the ancient Persians, the Germans worshipped above all things, the Sun and Fire, but yet, as the supreme divinity. Woden, whom they called the Father of All. The Romans compared him to their Mercury, chiefly on account of his relation to the same planet; though, in other respects, the office and character of the two divinities were totally different. Not merely in their especial worship of fire, as well as water, and generally of the primary powers of nature, but also in many other details and peculiarities, did the worship of the primitive Germans resemble that of the Persians more than that of the Greeks and Romans. Both among the Germans and the Persians sacred white horses were kept in consecrated groves for the service of the gods, and for solemn processions. Some German tribes also sacrificed horses; a custom which among all known nations of antiquity was especially mentioned of the Persians alone as a marked peculiarity of their worship. Like the Persians, the Germans despised the mode customary among other nations, of worshipping the gods in enclosed buildings, and of representing them in a great variety of images. This cannot be attributed to mere ignorance or incapacity. In times when fortresses existed among them, they still had no regular temples. The rudest nations, in fact, have been able to make uncouth images of their divinities; and if the Germans possessed nothing of the kind, it is a proof, not of their incapacity, but of their repugnance to them, or of a different conception of the subject.

The relationship between the Persian and German languages has been already often noticed by the learned; and a similar coincidence is also manifested in their respective constitutions. We perceive among the Persians the institution of the *arrière ban*, or levy in mass of all freemen for military service, and a kind of feudalism as well as a very clearly



marked spirit of chivalry. Hence agreement between the nations in many parts of their worship ought not to surprise us.

Besides its greater simplicity, the religion of the primitive Germans was pre-eminently distinguished from that of the Greeks and Romans by a firmer faith in the immortality of the soul. In the popular creed of the Greeks, the idea of another world was more a shadow of mournful recollection and feeble hope than an expectation of fixed certainty. Hence their dread of death, their anxious avoidance of any direct reference to it in words. Among the Germans the absolute conviction of another life removed all fear. In many cases, even, they were by this firm faith prompted to self-murder, not like the later Romans, from a false philosophy or from a disgust of life, but in cases in which they were moved thereto by love of country or of freedom. Thus German women, who, after the German custom, had accompanied the army, would often free themselves by their own hand, on the unfortunate issue of a battle, when capture appeared certain and no prospect of escape was visible. Thus ambassadors of a German tribe, who, by Roman perfidy, had been seized and treated as prisoners and hostages, destroyed themselves in order to baffle the object of the Romans, and that their countrymen might not be forced, out of consideration for them, into a disadvantageous peace. The Germans, it is true, like all heathen nations, conceived the next world under very sensual; and especially, in accordance with the national mode of thinking, under very warlike colours. The chief happiness of the blessed in the Walhalla consisted in martial sports. They revelled by day in the chase, and in contests of every kind, but when day declined, all their wounds were healed by magic power, the heroes became reconciled, and sat down together to the same festal banquet. The filling up of such a picture ever belongs to the imagination, but the truly important matter is the firm conviction of a real futurity, of another existence, more joyous, more pure, more lasting, nearer to God, than this short, frail, earthly existence.

Of the Supreme Being, of a righteous and merciful God ruling over all destinies and the powers of nature, the heathen nations of antiquity had indeed some conception, for the

government of the world and the conscience of man bear witness of him aloud. But this was but an isolated vestige of the truth, lost in a tissue of errors and fables. It may be maintained that in this respect the Germans were superior to other nations, who, instead of the worship of God and a religion, had but a worship of nature and a mythology. This appears deducible from the following circumstances in particular. By the Germanic law, capital punishment was awarded in but one case; in that of treachery to people and state—to the commonwealth. But it was not the duke or the prince, it was not the assembly of nobles and people who fixed and proclaimed the punishment. They deliberated, perhaps, and decided on the guilt of the party, but the judgment itself was pronounced and awarded in the name of the divinity by a priest of the nation, elected by the assembled nobles and people. Not prince or king, but Woden himself, the father of all, had, so to say, exclusive capital jurisdiction,—the power of life and death. Thus they conceived this their supreme national god as the avenger of disloyalty and perjury. An idea certainly worthier, and more moral than the best that can be deduced from the popular belief of the Greeks and Romans as to their Jupiter, even when they are not speaking of him in mere fables, but with an approximation to the higher notion of a father of all things. This old Germanic conception of a father of all, as the highest supreme judge and avenger of wrong, had great influence upon the so-called ordeals or judgments of God. In cases which baffled human sagacity, the matter was referred to single combat, or to the trial by fire and water, in the fixed idea and belief that God himself would decide on the result for right and truth. This was an error and custom, that despite the opposition of Christianity, was maintained for many centuries, and of which, at least upon the stage, we are even at the present day some times reminded, although not always very happily.

If we find the faith in nature and the worship of the primitive Germans very different from that of the Greeks and Romans, we must also yet more carefully guard against confounding their views and customs with the wholly different institutions of the Celts and Gauls.

We must always remember, that the lofty and noble feel-

ings, with which the worship of Nature and her great objects and mysteries filled the breast of primitive nations, were also mingled with strange, and, to a certain extent, with frightful errors. Even in the sensual fascinating worship of the Greeks, the moral influence of many of their conceptions and usages upon real life was very different from the beautiful poetic impression they make upon us, for on us the effect they produce is a mere play of the imagination. As among the Greeks in the earliest times—and we are still reminded of this practice by the beautiful poem of the Iphigenia—and as among the Romans for a much longer period; so also among the Germans, instances of human sacrifices are to be found, although seldom and only in rare cases. On certain festivals of the goddess Hertha, some youths and maidens of surpassing beauty (for it was precisely the most beautiful who were to be offered up as victims, and moreover voluntary victims to the goddess) were borne in solemn procession on the car of the goddess into the sacred grove, to the awful lake, and were then seen no more. Shocking festivals like these, however, were rare, as they were also among the more ancient Greeks. Very different was the case with the Gauls, among whom such victims fell by thousands, and whose whole worship seemed a perpetual shedding of blood. Whether from the influence of the Phœnician colonies (for that people like the Carthaginians were particularly addicted to human sacrifices), or whether from the sway of the powerful and ambitious sacerdotal order of the Druids; or whether even from the effect of the fiery and passionate character of the nation, or from whatever cause it may have arisen, the superstition of the primitive Gauls was so bloody, that in the whole course of history scarcely one single example of equal cruelty can be found, except in Mexico prior to its conquest by the Spaniards. The Romans, who were in general so tolerant to all religions, found it difficult even by repeated and stringent edicts to suppress the abuse and to extinguish the dangerous order of the Druids.

An order of Druids never existed among the Germans, nor was there an hereditary caste of priests. The assumption that Druids existed among the Germans is one of the numerous misunderstandings and errors, which the confounding of Celtic with German manners and institutions has given rise to.

As the worship of the Germans was so little overladen with ceremonies, such a priesthood was not required. Their mythological conceptions and fables of the gods, as well as the memory of their heroes, were perpetuated in their songs. But the poetic art was freely exercised among them; they had not bards any more than Druids; bards, that is, a distinct and exclusive corporation of poets entirely dependent on the priesthood. Among the Greeks the minstrels were independent of the priests; these bards wandered about, reciting their old sagas wherever they were wished for or invited. Hence the free and beautiful development which poetry took among the Greeks. The case was different among the Romans. The little they had of poetry, before they learned to imitate the Greeks, was solely devoted to purposes of Divine worship. This is proved even by the original Latin words for poet and poem;—*vates* means both poet and prophet; *carmen*, a poem as well as any formula, whether for adjuration or any other sacred purpose. Among the Celtic nations this sacerdotal influence existed to a still greater extent, as the bards cannot be considered otherwise than as totally dependent on the Druids. Against this view the poems of Ossian may perhaps be referred to, in which no such sacerdotal sway, and indeed hardly any mythology at all, is perceptible. To this we may answer that, undecided as is the dispute, how much or how little of these poems be genuine, yet whatever portion of them is genuine, dates from times when the whole political and sacerdotal constitution of the Celts had perished, when Christianity was almost universally received, and only here and there upon some highlands a mournful echo of the past was still audible. Not thus limited and dependent on Divine worship and sacred uses alone, after the manner of the Celts and primitive Romans, was the poetic art exercised among the Germans; nor yet after the Grecian manner. Of all the heroes of Grecian fable, it is Achilles alone who touches the lyre, and, sitting by the sea-shore, controls his inward wrath by his own strains. What Grecian poesy celebrates in this chosen favourite was the universal practice of the Germans; the heroes were themselves the poets. Thus even in Christian times King Alfred also exercised the art, and, in the disguise of a minstrel, went to the Danish camp, to reconnoitre. Thus the Danish hero, Regner Lodbrog, dying

in captivity, celebrated his own death in verses; thus Odin was at once king and poet; thus, to omit many examples from northern and German history and tradition, German emperors and princes, even in the middle age, did not disdain composing poems and ranking themselves among minstrels. So was it also in the earliest times, as is from many reasons certain. Perhaps on that very account was German poetry less developed as an art than the Grecian, which was an art from the very beginning; but the influence on life of the strong natural feelings expressed in German poetry became thereby intenser and more direct.

German mythology has died away, scarcely a shadow of its memory still remains, except perhaps in the English and German names for the days of the week; for these the names of some of the German gods, particularly of Woden, of Thor, and Thyn, and of the German goddess of love, Freya, have been preserved. It would be a mistake, however, to think that all action and influence of the old German religion had ceased upon the introduction of Christianity. After that mythology had ceased to exist as an actual faith and worship, it lived on still for centuries in the poetry of the middle age; yes, even in our times, all that we term romantic in fictions, conceptions, and feelings, all that is wholly peculiar to us moderns and has not been copied from the ancients, flowed originally and essentially from this source.

Hence the absurdity of the wish not obscurely intimated by some writers, and springing from a false and mistaken patriotism, that the pure knowledge and worship of God—that Christianity—had after all been never introduced into Germany; and at their lamenting as a kind of misfortune, that the national religion, as they fancy, was thereby suppressed. This is wholly unfounded. All that was good and beautiful, all that was in any sense true, all that was noble and attractive in the German religious system, has been preserved in our romantic poetry, and as such still lives. Beautiful to us considered as mere poetry, is indeed the religious system not only of the Germans but of all the nations of antiquity; but yet it betrays little knowledge, I will not say of philosophy and history, but of the human heart itself, not to perceive how much that system contains, when received as an earnest faith and exerting actual influence, that is utterly

erroneous, pernicious, and immoral, and moreover how much of inward torture and anxiety it inflicts upon the soul.

Judge as we may of the social condition of the Germans according to our different notions of the savage and the civilized state, their constitution deserves our fullest attention, for it is the foundation of all modern history and European civilization. Simple, artless, altogether natural as this constitution was, we shall nevertheless find it bear the stamp not only of high moral strength, but even of strong understanding. On this point we may well trust the judgment of the Romans, who had so much experience in legislation and constitutions, who had reflected so much on those subjects. They were acquainted with savage, semi-savage, and civilized nations enough in all the three ancient regions of the world to institute the comparison. They have hardly bestowed such attention on the constitution of any people as on that of the Germans. The surprise and astonishment with which they speak of it, go often to the length of admiration. The essence of this constitution consisted in the combination of the highest individual freedom with the closest corporate union. Each freeman was altogether free and independent, was in a certain sense his own master, took an active part in the direction of the community—in the government of the state. He had the right of appearing armed at the general assembly, in which subjects of state were deliberated and decided on, and wherein out of the noble families the count or judge of the province was elected; for at that time this was not yet an hereditary distinction, but a personal dignity. They were chosen for times of peace, but in those of war a military leader of the state, of the armed people, or according to the old appellation, a duke, was the chief. He was elected, as Tacitus reminds us, not for his birth, but for his merit. Thus, besides the freemen, there was also a nobility. The nobles had precedence and pre-audience at the provincial and general assemblies, although the freemen also took part in them. Hence we already find here the first germ of the two divisions and chambers for the assembled powers of the state, and discover this lauded institution to be one originally Germanic. Whether in the military service any distinction was allotted to the nobility we are not distinctly informed. The following circumstance, however, renders it probable. The Romans notice as an essential pecu-

liarity of German tactics the custom of mingling and combining horsemen and foot-soldiers together; every horseman was accompanied by a light-armed foot-soldier, who in battle was always at hand, and assisted him in every way. Cæsar, a great observer, found in the then prevailing mode of arming and fighting this arrangement very advantageous, and introduced it into his own army. It was principally to it, as well as to his German auxiliaries, that he believed himself indebted for victory at the battle of Pharsalia, when the sovereignty of the world was fought for. Does not this old Germanic custom remind us of that part in the tactics of the middle age, in which the heavy-armed knights were accompanied by foot-soldiers to serve and assist them? From the nature of the case, it may perhaps be inferred that the warrior on horseback had precedence over his assistant on foot, so that the serving on horseback may have been even at that time, as it was afterwards, chiefly, if not exclusively, the distinction and privilege of the nobles. More in such privileges, and in the glory of their race, in the memory of distinguished and celebrated ancestors, than in greater wealth, did their pre-eminence consist.

Princely families, evidently with hereditary rights, are mentioned at a very early period among the Germans. The supposition that an hereditary royalty, which at a later period was universally introduced, existed even in early times, is confirmed by the right of primogeniture being generally predominant in the German law of succession. Yet in the beginning this may not always have been exclusively the case among the kings and princes, but the right of electing one out of several members of the royal or princely house may have prevailed. The power of the elected dukes also may often have set limits to the hereditary privileges of the princes. The position of the freemen can best be understood by calling to mind the institutions of the Swiss mountain cantons, or rather, as their freedom is also compatible with an hereditary nobility and royalty, those of the Swedish Dalecarlians, and generally of those countries in which the peasantry constitute an order of the state, have the right of bearing arms, and of taking part in the deliberations of the national diets. This holds good, however, only of the independent householders and landowners, who have some at

least, if not many, day-labourers to aid them in the cultivating of their lands. This was precisely the state of things among the primitive Germans. The relation of the inhabitants of a whole district to a single lord as his vassals or serfs, we must not here introduce; this system was not developed till a much later period. We may safely assume also, that among the Germans the lot of this third and last class of men was infinitely milder than that of the slaves among the Greeks and Romans. The warlike frontier nations on this side the Rhine supplied themselves with agricultural labourers chiefly by prisoners of war.

Thus nobility and freedom were the foundation of the primitive Germanic constitution,—an order of nobles and an order of freemen, under elected dukes or hereditary princes; these embrace the whole extent of the German state. But what a nobility and what a freedom, compared with the despotic, oppressive, avaricious nobility of Sparta or ancient Rome, and with the tumultuous freedom of the petty Grecian states! A nobility based upon a precedence not harsh, and on universal freedom, a freedom founded upon honour, virtue, and loyalty! In no nation do we find the nobility, that first of all orders, that foundation of every institution of estates, that first and most essential and natural element of the true estate, characterized by such grand and striking qualities, and placed in such perfect relations with the other classes, as among the Germans. For this reason is their primitive history so instructive. How the clergy were afterwards added as a second estate, and then how the third became developed; and how, finally, in modern times, various divisions and artificial relations have arisen,—all this is unfolded in the course of history. In this respect, it may be said, that German history, from the oldest to the most modern times, is a natural and most instructive theory of the true state; that is, of the constitution of the three estates. Instead of an imaginary state of nature, we find in the mixed constitution of the Germans, a polity really based upon nature; for altogether simple and natural were their institutions of state and legislation. Every freeman had the right of self-protection against others, nay, if a quarrel terminated in the death of one of the parties, vengeance was not only the right, but even the duty, of the nearest male heir or armed relative. The state, and in its



name, the court, only interfered as umpire as it were, between the contending parties, to prevent further misfortune, and to restore concord by means of a compensatory fine, or some other expiation as law, custom, or tradition might direct. From this primitive right of self-defence sprang the many petty feuds of the middle age, and hence the custom of duelling, unknown to the ancients, has been perpetuated even to our own times in most European countries.

This freedom of individuals, it must be admitted, became often injurious to the peace and unity of the nation. Whilst we readily acknowledge, however, the existence of those abuses, which the legislature has been unable in the course of centuries to root out, or even to mitigate, yet must we not forget that the development of the high sentiments of honour, under the control of law, is one of the noblest and most essential characteristics of modern European civilization. It is precisely the most difficult problem in statesmanship, to combine order and unity of strength in the state, with the greatest possible amount of individual freedom.

We must not think, however, that by reason of this individual freedom, in respect to each other, all was in a state of lawless anarchy. In one case the laws were very stringent; namely, in whatever related to the state and to the general confederacy. Here the principle "each for all, and all for each," was carried out even to life and death. Any disloyalty or breach of duty to the state, was punished with death, and so was cowardice. Whoever lost his shield was outlawed, put out of the pale of honour and law. National and state unity sprang out of a league actually contracted, and not supposititious only. Each people constituted a confederation, as we would now term it. It happened in those olden times, precisely as in Switzerland in modern times, where the people entered into a free association for mutual defence and protection, and by that very league first became a nation. The Romans call us a multitude of separate German tribes; by such are often meant only the inhabitants of a particular district, of one or more provinces. The names of the more remote tribes in the interior, learned only by hearsay, are not a little corrupted, and, save national names, were given merely from misunderstanding and from ignorance of the language. When-

ever the Romans, however, speak from personal observation, and with more accurate knowledge, and especially when they describe the more considerable Germanic nations in their own neighbourhood on the Rhenish frontier; then, it is easy to perceive that by these so-called nations leagues and confederacies are to be understood. Thus the Suabian confederacy was very powerful, and at first formidable to the Romans, and not less so the league of the Hessians. Both remain to this day; for the most part too in the very same seats, as distinct German races,—distinguishable by many characteristics from the others. The league of the Cherusci in northern Germany was rendered remarkable by their prince and duke Arminius (Hermann). Even the name of Germans is derived from this system, for the Romans extended the name from the tribe among whom they first heard it, to several others, and ultimately to all. In modern times historians have applied to these primitive leagues, and this Germanic custom of confederation, the word “heermannia,” in reference to the appellation “Germani.” It would be more fit and accurate, however, to render in our present language the word German by “Wehrmann.” Our “wehr” signifying defence and arms, is originally the same word as the English “war,” from which the French and Italian “guerre” and “guerra” are only distinguished by a different mode of pronunciation; it is indisputably the root from which “German” is derived. Thus the word Germans signifies the Wehr-men, that is to say, not only warriors, but allies for mutual defence and protection,—a confederate community. The only thing wanting in these national leagues, was that all the peoples of Germany were not united, not one great confederacy. This could not be accomplished at once; for the Germans indeed, like all other European nations, were originally split into a great number of petty tribes and states. The necessities incurred in their more extensive military enterprises, and more especially in their arduous struggle with the Romans, led to a more comprehensive national combination.

The gradual union of the different German nations, the realization at last of a grand German national unity, its maintenance for a thousand years, and its restoration more than once after temporary disruptions;—this it is that constitutes our modern history.

Besides these national confederacies, the real essence and foundation of the state; another species of association existed among the Germans, which was freer, and more adapted to individuals. This was that singular brotherhood in arms, the enthusiastic fidelity in which the Romans describe with admiration and no little astonishment. Out of friendship, warriors would pledge themselves to live and die together—to share victory or death.

Men eager for fame would connect themselves in particular with powerful and princely heroes, as their free associates and honourable attendants. Their fidelity was so great, that scarcely an instance was known of a retinue of vassals surviving the death of their brother in arms or their chief. From this military friendship and association proceeded the whole feudal constitution. The princely chief was bound to promote the welfare of his followers; and hence the German conquerors divided and distributed whole countries among their attendants, on condition of the same fidelity and honourable service. The love of warlike enterprise was thereby not a little excited; and hence by nothing more than this institution was the spirit of chivalry itself developed; for in these cases war was not the result of any decree of the assembled nobles and people. Even when the confederate state was at peace, if the chief had the courage and inclination to undertake some petty military enterprise, he could fearlessly begin and carry on the adventure. The feudal constitution in its degeneracy was attended by many and great abuses; but we must not on that account overlook its first and noble origin, any more than the great and glorious effects which the spirit of chivalry produced. Effects which are not yet altogether effaced, and which we cannot well wish ever wholly to disappear.

Together with this enthusiastic brotherhood in arms, nothing seems to have excited the attention and astonishment of the Romans more than the relations of the female sex among the Germans; the high consideration which their women enjoyed, the honour and the liberty in which they lived. In this respect also we find among the primitive Germans the first origin of what so favourably distinguishes the manners and civilization of the moderns;—the spiritual love, the freer and more polished intercourse, the higher refinement of the female sex.

Some influence upon these peculiar relations of the female sex among the Germans may be ascribed to climate. That the German climate had no injurious effect upon health, nor even upon beauty of form, we may easily infer from the descriptions of the Romans. Moreover, physical development, especially that of the women, was not so early in these colder latitudes, as in warmer countries. The late marriages of the Germans excited the particular attention of the Romans. Tacitus says, they believed this custom to be necessary to maintain the vigour of the race. Certain it is that this custom must have essentially contributed towards the high consideration, towards the freer position of the female sex. Where bodily maturity, as in many southern countries of Asia, is so early, that marriages even border upon childhood;—where women become mothers even at the tenderest age; there the choice for life can be no free choice; there, even if the laws do allow polygamy, great, almost insuperable obstacles exist to the full development of the faculties of the soul in the female, and to the dignity which she is entitled to by nature.

The wife, it is true, received no dowry among the Germans; on the contrary, the suitor, as among most nations of antiquity, had to present a gift to the father, ransom-money, as it were. But we must not thence conclude that the father sold his daughter as his property. There was a great and essential distinction between the Asiatic and the German custom. In Asia it is the rule that the husband shall not see the bride until the marriage be actually concluded; in Germany, on the contrary, it was the custom that the suitor and his beloved should be acquainted with one another, and that a long friendly intercourse should precede their union. The alliance was contracted by free choice; and it was chiefly this free choice, and not the simplicity of manners alone, that made the marriages of the Germans in their strictness and happy concord appear to the Romans, something so totally different from anything they had been accustomed to among themselves.

If abductions were frequent among the Germans even in early times,—if Arminius himself carried off his Thusnelda, still we must not assume that violence was thereby offered to her inclinations; the father alone was his enemy,

and so remained. In the state of things we have described, it may have often happened that the views of the father were opposed to the lovers and their choice, and that he would not ratify the contract which free inclination had concluded. The wedding-gift the wife received is also worthy of notice; a portion of it consisted of a war-horse, a shield, and some weapon. I do not conceive that this custom was universal; in all probability it prevailed chiefly among the noble families, and the present may not have been meant merely as a symbol, but for actual use. For the women accompanied the army in war, and took charge of the wounded; they frequently restored a losing fight; and if the result was disastrous, often by a voluntary death gave the astonished Romans an unparalleled example of lofty courage.

Thus among this people woman had her part in every great and honourable enterprise, even in those which man regarded as his highest distinction, the pride and the joy of his life.

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To place a rapid sketch of history before our eyes, it is necessary to touch anew upon facts that have been long known. The only thing that in this embarrassment inspires the historian with some degree of confidence is, that the glorious recollections of the past, the great subjects of history carry in themselves a perennial charm; that they remain in a certain sense ever new; and appear in a brighter light to us the more our own lives expand. As the past alone teaches us to gaze with a tranquil eye upon the present; so an eventful present throws light in various ways upon the darkness of the past. How many a page of history, otherwise unintelligible, has, since the occurrences of recent years, received a totally new light! It is a common idea, that the migration of the northern nations was a deluge, as it were, of countless hosts of barbarians, and that, from the eastern frontiers of China down to the western coasts of Spain, a universal restless frenzy, an involuntary impulse, had suddenly seized on all savage tribes and swept, driven, and precipitated them along, till the old civilization was totally destroyed, and the barbarism of the middle age introduced. In reality, and viewed in their historical connection, however, these events present a very different aspect. At first, the Germans and Romans only really took part in them. The Huns, the only

people, not Germanic and coming immediately from Asia, who exercised any influence over this migration, were so little numerous, and their influence was so insignificant, that the development of what had been long ripe for development, would upon the whole have occurred, even without this people, exactly as it did.

Scarcely any other great historical event was so slowly prepared, and brought about—aye even for centuries, so gradually and step by step,—as the migration of the northern nations; that is to say, the armed occupation of the provinces of the Roman empire by the Germans, and their final conquest of the four principal regions of western Europe: Italy, France, Spain, and England. There were two great but simple causes for this event. It had become a necessity to the Germans, in their northern seats amidst a growing population, to send out colonies in order to rid themselves of their surplus numbers. In whatever direction they sought out new abodes, whether in the west, the south, or the south-east, they came in contact with the wide-spread Roman empire. Hence their many great and oft-renewed wars with the Romans, which from the first appearance of the Teutons and Cimbri, somewhat more than a hundred years before the birth of Christ, until the conquest of Rome by Alaric, king of the Goths, lasted full five hundred years. Even those first northern strangers, that struck so much terror into Rome, merely sought new dwelling-places. Not destructive conquest, not a predatory expedition, but colonization, was their object, by fair means, or, if this were unavailing, by recurrence to force. Land, in return for military service, according to the universal Germanic custom, this it was which they demanded on peaceable conditions. A province was to be ceded to them, and in return, as faithful auxiliaries, they would place the general levy of their force at disposal for military service. They came, it is true, as armed military settlers; but even then always peaceably negotiating at first, as did all who, for five centuries, down to the time of Alaric, followed them from the north to the frontiers of the Roman empire. At a later period the Teutones and the Cimbri would easily have obtained their object; and many an emperor would have accounted himself fortunate, by the cession of a province, to gain so noble a reinforcement for his army. A few centuries

before the Cimbrian war, when southern and western Europe was still broken up into a number of petty states, it would have been even easy for these nations to acquire new seats in some quarter or another, by fair means or by force. But now, as they had to encounter all-powerful Rome in her fullest strength and bloom, their valour was forced to yield after a few fruitless victories to superior military art;—they were destroyed.

According to the universal tradition, which in this case history fully confirms, the same cause which had brought the Cimbri and Teutones into conflict with the Romans,—namely, a population in the north outgrowing the productions of the soil,—led the Swiss also and the Suabians to their present seats. To what this increasing population in the north and the consequent necessity for emigration were attributable, we cannot state with precision or in detail; but in the fact itself there is nothing improbable. If central and southern Germany was, at that time, by reason of its extensive forests, much more rugged than at present; if then agriculture was thereby infinitely more restricted in those regions than it now is; if it was even made a matter subordinate to the chase; yet, as has been already observed, this remark by no means applies to northern Germany, or to those parts more contiguous to the coast. In these northernmost seats of the Germans, agriculture was widely extended; the population might be numerous, and relatively too numerous. At the present day we can observe, perhaps in Switzerland and Suabia only, how with a healthy and prolific race, and with a soil of scanty production, the necessity of relieving themselves of a part of their superfluous population is evinced in emigrations or other enterprises. In Sweden, Denmark, and northern Germany this custom does not seem now to be prevalent; but how much have not the tillage of the land, the food, the mode of living, and, with these even the race, been altered! The second great cause of the migrations was the ever-increasing feebleness and degeneracy of the constitution of the Roman empire, which at last depopulated the provinces, and thus facilitated the irruptions and the settlements of the armed colonists from the north, and favoured their enterprises in every way.

I shall now resume the thread of the historical narrative,

but shall touch upon those events, those characters only, which constitute an epoch; for in them it is that the spirit of the time is revealed. It is not my desire or my object to go over once more the whole series and succession of events, but rather to suggest new reflections upon well-known facts.

The Romans came for the second time in contact with the Germans during Cæsar's sanguinary conquest of Gaul, which paved the way to his sovereignty and became its foundation. The Suabian king, Ariovistus, one on whom the Romans, after their manner, had long before conferred the very significant, always important, and often dangerous title, of friend of the Roman people, had acquired a settlement in that country by a treaty with one of the Gallic nations. Cæsar waged war against him, forced him to withdraw, and made incursions into Germany, which he was the first to describe as an eyewitness. But not upon the better equipment of his army, nor upon his superiority in the art of war, did he alone rely. Against some of the German tribes he carried on war in a manner at once so faithless and so cruel, that when he demanded a thanksgiving in the senate for the victories he had obtained, his demand was rejected, and his enemies, Cato in particular, declared that for the honour of the Roman name he should be delivered up to those tribes.

Very different was the manner in which the Romans treated the subjugated nations. The Greeks they treated mildly (setting aside individual acts of violence), as well as all Græco-Asiatic nations, and deluded them in every way with phantoms of freedom and a mock continuation of their old national existence. Against the western and northern nations in Spain and France they waged a war of extermination. History can scarcely name a more sanguinary war than that in which Cæsar achieved the final conquest of Gaul.

To replace the void thus caused, the colonies were chiefly directed thitherward. Historians for the most part, according to their respective opinions and judgments, speak only of battles, and of the concerns of rulers, of their virtues and their faults. The still workings of plastic mind and toil are passed over in silence, till at last, after centuries perhaps, the great result of this latent activity bursts suddenly upon our astonished eyes. How instructive would it not be, if we had a detailed account of the process whereby France and Spain,



by means of colonies and under the influence of the ruling country, became in a short space of time so thoroughly romanized, as their very languages prove them to have been. The manner in which Mexico and Peru, likewise, after a sanguinary and almost exterminating war against the original inhabitants, were converted, by means of constant emigrations, into a real New Spain, Spanish in language, customs, and race, is the only event in modern times comparable with this revolution. The perpetual civil wars of the Romans,—the proscriptions under the emperors,—may have contributed to drive many from Italy, who would prefer the tranquillity of the provinces, and the securer profits of agriculture and of commerce in the smaller towns, to the perilous tumults of the metropolis. These would naturally settle in the newly romanized countries.

As regarded the Germans, the Romans wavered between their two different modes of warfare. At first, they may have entertained the hope and the intention of subjugating the Germans, like the Gauls, perhaps, even of exterminating them, or at least of rooting out their constitution, their customs; and their language; in a word, all that made them German. But soon, perhaps under Augustus, and quite certainly under Tiberius, it became recognised as a fundamental maxim of Roman policy not to provoke the Germans to hostilities, but to keep up and foment discord among them, to organize a party in the country favourable to themselves, to gain over and corrupt individual chiefs, by conferring on them honours and dignities, by invitations to the metropolis, and by the seductiveness of its pleasures.

Arminius appears the greatest and most important character in this whole Germanic period; perhaps because, thanks to the master-hand of the great Roman, who could not refuse him his admiration, we know him better and more fully than any other hero of the time, but also because in him the inmost spirit and the highest tendencies of the age are the most clearly evinced. How arduous was that contest for freedom wherein the Germans were engaged against Rome! What obstacles the hero of his country had to encounter among his own people!

have possessed, to enable him, not indeed to obtain decisive success by brilliant victories and conquests, but at least to erect a

bulwark of freedom for the future, and to prepare happier times by sowing the seeds of great efforts and recollections in the minds of his people !

The whole strength of the vast empire, which had been first consolidated by Augustus, was principally directed by him against the Germans. In the south he succeeded in establishing the frontier on the Danube, and thereby brought several Germanic and semi-Germanic tribes under Roman sway. Less fortunate were his attempts in the north. The country, it is true, between the Rhine and the Elbe was under Roman dominion for a few years ; but when Varus, contrary to all the dictates of prudence, sought prematurely to introduce Roman laws and oppression, his celebrated defeat ensued. Here on Arminius's side the perfect and deeply meditated preparation of the great enterprise, as well as in the decisive moment its rapid and complete execution, are more to be admired than the victory itself.

The house of Arminius had been favoured by Augustus, he had himself served in the Roman armies as chief of the Cherusci. He was familiar with the military art of the Romans, their language and civilization, but he remained unalterably devoted to his fatherland. No vulgar impulse, but the clear conviction alone of what was salutary for Germany and needful for her safety, inflamed his hatred against Rome. He proved himself a great general, especially in the war against Germanicus, a foe worthy of him. The latter indeed penetrated into the heart of Germany with a greatly superior force, and boasted or even believed that he had gained several victories ; but Arminius ever reappeared ready for battle, and the pretended victories of the Romans terminated in a retreat, in which they were ceaselessly harassed, nay even pursued, by the enemy. Their great historian confesses the magnitude of their loss, and the fact that if Arminius was defeated in battles, he never was so in war.

On this side Germany remained free ; the struggle, however, had been most severe ; a portion of the country was desolated. Arminius had perceived what was really wanting to obtain security against Roman conquest,—viz., a general union and close co-operation of the different German nations. Hence arose the war against Marbod, a king of southern Germany, who at peace with the Romans, had remained neutral

during the war for the freedom of his country. The government of Marbod, copied from the Roman model, was detested, he was forced to flee, and eighteen years afterwards died ingloriously at Ravenna, a dependant on Roman bounty. If Arminius afterwards was accused of aiming at the universal sovereignty, if he fell through the hatred of his own kindred, and the envy of the other princes, we may well presume from the whole tenour and spirit of his life, that he sought not for himself more than was his due, but rather that he only wished to bring about a fuller union and consolidation of the German nation. He had learned, indeed, from experience wherein its weakness lay, and on this very subject his great views were probably misunderstood.

Arminius was not one of those heroes, who, intoxicated with happiness and fame, follow only their own unbounded impulses and the rapid stream of their fortune. He was rather one of those who, recognising in some great object of public welfare their mission and their highest duty, and gloriously striving against the current of corrupt and perilous times, and against superior force, make a sacrifice of their whole lives in ceaseless exertion and self-devotion. Both his own and his wife's brother lived estranged from their fatherland among the Romans. The former, Flavius, whose German name has not been preserved, even bore arms against him. Siegmund, Thusnelda's brother, was raised to the dignity of the Roman priesthood in the colony of the Ubii. Wavering in his sentiments between the lustre of Rome and the voice of his fatherland, he cast off in shame the treacherous ensigns of alien honours, when Arminius liberated Germany, yet subsequently attached himself to Segest, who was on the Roman side. Segest, the father of his wife, was the implacable foe to the liberator of his country. Even his uncle, who had fought so long by his side, ultimately deserted him, out of envy at the precedence, which the youthful hero necessarily acquired by the glory of his military deeds, and as the elected chief of his nation. He was forced to see his Thusnelda led away captive, and gracing the triumph of the arrogant Roman. At last, bitterest of all, he received for his reward the decided universal ingratitude of his own people! One of the German princes even sent an embassy to the emperor Tiberius to demand poison, at that time unknown in Germany, in order secretly to

rid them of the liberator of their country, as they were unable to effect this object by open warfare. Even Tiberius replied to the demand, to which a German prince had thus degraded himself, in a manner worthy of Rome's ancient dignity.

It was not till after his death, that the deeds of Arminius, by their vast immeasurable consequences, were crowned with their noblest success. With reason did the German nations, when in death envy was extinguished, celebrate the fame of the hero in wide-sung lays; and not without cause have all our modern national historians and poets ever pointed back to Arminius. As the preserver, the true founder and second patriarch of the German nation, he is to be also regarded as the commencement and founder of all modern history, of the free institutions and civilization of Europe. Without him, without his deeds and constancy, all this would not have been, and we may thus say that the brief, toilsome, heroic life of Arminius, filled with strife and sorrow, has produced greater consequences, a deeper and certainly more permanent influence upon the history of the world, than Alexander's brilliant conquest and Cæsar's bloody victories.

The earliest of our national poets has offered a beautiful tribute to our hero in a series of dramatic pictures. It is a pleasing poem not only from its national sentiments and the loftiness and dignity which characterize it in common with all other of Klopstock's works, but from its many great and touching individual traits. It has one singular peculiarity however, that a poem in celebration of the earliest of all German heroes, is written more in the spirit, and in the artificial, terse, sharp, sententious style of a Seneca or generally of a Roman, than with the artless joy and love that would bring back the Germans of Arminius and the simplicity of his times before us.

After Arminius the great Batavian insurrection under Civilis occupies the most important place in the Roman histories. The issue of this remarkable national war, the real soul of which was the enthusiastic prophetess Velleda, is not completely known. Certain it is that the Batavian people, although under Roman dominion, preserved the independence and individuality of their manners and language: they remained Germans. That this was likewise the case among the tribes south of the Danube, in Rætia, in Vindelicia, Noricum, and Pannonia, is in some districts at least certain,

in others probable. The Germans remained on the whole unconquered, inasmuch as learning much from the Romans, they yet remained true and constant to their national manners and language, and, where they were able, to their old constitution. In individual battles they were often overcome by the superior military skill of the Romans. Many emperors even penetrated deep into the heart of Germany, and of these Trajan, under whom the country between the Maine and the Danube became Roman, maintained himself there the longest. This was perhaps the most dangerous moment for German freedom. Caligula, Domitian, in order to give the spectacle of a Germanic triumph, had prisoners of other nations dressed in the German garb, caused them to let their hair grow, and even to dye it red, because the vulgar Roman could not conceive the Germans to be otherwise than red-haired. Trajan required none of these childish arts, *he* desired to celebrate a Germanic triumph in earnest. Important in relation to Germany was also Trajan's great conquest in the north-east. He reduced all Dacia to the condition of a province, and sought to secure it by a numerous colony. Of the intermixture of the Roman soldiers and settlers with the original inhabitants, the Wallachian nation, who call themselves Romans, are a still living memorial. It seems as if Trajan had foreseen, from what point the Germans would make their most formidable attacks, from what point destruction would fall upon the Roman empire.

The most important and decisive of the subsequent Germanic wars was that carried on under Marcus Aurelius against the so-called Marcomanni, along the whole southern frontier of the Danube. In this war the Germans penetrated to Aquileia; and when peace was at last concluded, the Quadi, inhabitants of the present Austria, were able to restore fifty thousand prisoners to the Romans. The preponderance of the Germans was now decided, and the fall of the Roman empire easy to be foreseen. Even Cæsar had achieved victories by the aid of Germans; Augustus formed his body-guard out of them, and all succeeding emperors sought more and more to enlist Germans in their armies.

Under every government from the time of Marcus Aurelius, their influence in the army and the state becomes even more perceptible, as well as at every conclusion of a new peace the

dependence of the Romans.' We more frequently find German names among the pretenders to the empire, who started up in individual provinces, or among the highest functionaries appointed by the emperors. Even before the time of Constantine, numerous German colonies on many different points were admitted into the Roman empire; the need of some great change was felt more and more; and the German party (for that is the appellation really applicable to the state of things) grew palpably stronger; till at last whole provinces, whole classes of the empire, the highest state-functionaries, and often the emperors themselves, called upon, challenged, the Germans now to consummate what had been so long prepared.

The fall of Rome was not occasioned by her many bad emperors; it was of itself inevitable. The Roman empire had from its very origin neither a constitution, nor any firm foundation in the minds of men. I say no constitution; although in old republican Rome the powers of the state were divided among patricians, people, and knights, consuls, senate, and tribunes, in such a manner, that if re-established by a powerful arm, and vivified anew, a real and fitting constitution might have been organized for the city, and undoubtedly also for the limited confines of a single country, such as Italy. But how was it possible to adapt the obsolete forms of a city, that had grown to be mistress of the world, to a vast empire, consisting of many different nations and countries? The privileges of a Roman citizen were indeed soon extended to individuals among the subject nations; but if here the son of a German prince was raised to the dignity of a Roman knight, there a Syrian or Egyptian admitted to the privileges of Roman citizenship; surely this could establish no true unity among such heterogeneous parts. It was but a feeble copy of the outward form, when many of the chief provincial cities were organized on the model of Rome, and were adorned with a capitol, theatre, and naumachia. Indeed, the ancient senate in the metropolis itself was nothing more than a powerless shadow of extinct though great recollections. Fruitless also was the extension of the right of Roman citizenship to all Italy, and ultimately to the whole empire; for neither was a genuine order of citizens, nor a common nobility thereby produced, which as a visible and active portion of the national

powers, might have been a pillar and bond to the throne, and a living instrument in the hands of the emperor. All remained abandoned to the uncontrolled will of one, identified with the will of the people; or even in worse cases, subject to the caprices of an army, by whom the despot was in turn governed, and which at last remained the sole real power in the state. Thus Rome, equally anarchical when a monarchy as when a republic, could not attain to a constitution.

The want of a firm foundation for the state was chiefly evinced in the moral corruption and in the religion of the nation, or rather in the absence of the latter. Even in the later times of the republic, with the spread of luxury and the sudden change of manners, there was manifested, as usually happens in such cases, a general spirit of unbelief, of religious indifference, and of contempt for ancient customs. To this evil the introduction of the Greek philosophy had much contributed. It was chiefly the system of Epicurus, however, avowing indeed a refined sensuality and polished selfishness, but at bottom undermining all belief in God and in morality,—that at first met with general approbation and countless adherents. The emperor Augustus, it is true, felt the evil and its source; all his state-policy and energy were directed to the restoring of the ancient laws and customs, and to the maintenance of the popular creed. This last effort, however, was too late; the cause of the impossibility of its success lay in the very nature of this creed. Any creed, based upon the recognition of one God, however weakened it may be by the corruption of morals and education, disunion and even universal indifference, may yet be restored, as soon as a powerful hand is found, whose mission it is; for a fixed point is contained in it to which one can always return,—a substantial and secure foundation remains after everything transitory is removed. The idolatry of the Greeks and Romans was in itself unconnected, without unity or fixed basis, too manifestly fabulous, and too much the work of mere imagination to render its revival possible, when once the feeling of this weakness had become general. Augustus sought to effect the closest and strictest union of divine worship with the state; but when a Nero was clothed with the highest priestly dignity, when a Divus Tiberius, or a Divus Caligula received divine honours after death; surely it was not pos-

sible to restore to the gods their ancient dignity, or to men their ancient virtue and lost faith. Could any man have restored the old Roman energy and severe greatness, it had been Trajan; but as he failed, we must conclude that the attempt was altogether too late. His deep-thinking successor, Hadrian, seems to have attributed the evil chiefly to the want of spiritual unity, to the difference in the modes of thinking and intellectual culture of the various nations composing the Roman empire. From this period the Grecian mind began to resume its natural supremacy in literature and science. Hadrian's leading idea may have been to fuse together the learning and taste of all the most civilized nations of the empire, not even excluding the Egyptian, and thereby to reanimate and invigorate anew the decaying spirit of the Roman world. But this too could only be a passing attempt. The Antonines had recourse to other means of safety; the Stoic philosophy was now to uphold the popular faith, incurable as was its decay, or to replace it; it was favoured in every manner; its propagation and inculcation became an affair of state. And doubtless it gave many great men to the state and to mankind; but, not to reckon other defects, a science so difficult to be understood, could never be suitable to all men, could never become a popular creed.

This defect was supplied by Christianity. In its sublime philosophy and system of morals, many men, familiar with the whole intellectual culture of the Greeks and Romans, found a contentment, which neither Plato nor the Stoa had afforded them; but this contentment was no exclusive privilege of a few philosophers, inaccessible to the great bulk of mankind. Christianity was philosophy, but yet was at the same time accessible to all, and had equal effect upon all classes, as it did not act upon one, but upon all the faculties of the soul. Hence, in despite of the most strenuous opposition, Christianity displaced more and more the old fantastic polytheism, which gradually retreated and disappeared before it. The Roman State, however, Christianity was unable to save, even when it had become predominant and universal. It may surprise us, that the doctrines which undeniably gave so many individuals strength for the greatest sacrifices, or for the still more arduous fulfilment of the most rigid laws, should



have effected nothing for the state. The reason is, that even under the Christian emperors, religion, except as to some parts and provisions of private law, had no influence whatever on the political institutions and on the constitution, or rather non-constitution of the state. Everything in this respect remained as it was. It would have required, moreover, great energy, and a profound mind, to create a new constitution adapted to the purer ideas of God and to man—a constitution for which the most necessary conditions were wanting. Even the expedient that most readily suggested itself,—namely, by the mediation and influence of the clergy to act upon the people, and to bring public opinion into harmony with the views of the sovereign, was, at least in the Western empire, totally neglected. That in the Greek empire a certain degree at least of union existed between the state and the clergy was, together with its superior geographical position in respect of the German nations, one of the principal causes, that its existence, then a feeble one, was so infinitely longer protracted.

The Goths were the first who acquired settlements in the Roman empire, on the north-east, precisely at the point where Trajan's conquests and great colonies seemed destined to protect the frontier. The immigration of the Germanic nations into the Western empire occurred chiefly in two directions, and from two different points. The first immigration was that of the Goths, and the kindred tribes, who, from the east, overran the southern countries of the empire, Italy, southern Gaul, Spain, and the African coasts. The second was from the north-west of Germany, whence the Franks and Saxons invaded and conquered northern Gaul and the southern parts of Britain. We shall first touch briefly upon the Gothic conquests and kingdoms, then upon the Frankish.

That the Goths, a great primitive Germanic people, came from Sweden, in which some provinces still bear their name, belongs by no means to the number of undoubted historic truths. It is certain that they penetrated from the north-eastern seats of the Germans, from the coasts of the Baltic Sea, into the southern seats, in which we afterwards find them. The motive of their migration may have been like that of all the earlier ones,—the necessities of a growing population.

That these victorious settlers did not take a direction more to the west, nor due south towards Gaul or Italy, but to the south-east, is accounted for by the strong defences of the Roman frontier on the Rhine and the Danube. Here lay the flower of the Roman army; and the unbroken chain of forts they held formed ramparts quite impregnable, when the empire was still powerful, and tenable with an effort, even in the times of its decay. In the south-eastern districts, on the contrary, the Goths encountered, in the first instance, only petty tribes, with some of whom they may have been of old connected, and over whom they could easily gain an ascendancy. As early as two hundred years after Christ, they were widely spread over those south-eastern countries; and in the fourth century, under Ermanaric, the great Gothic kingdom stretched from the Black Sea, from the mouth of the Danube, including all Dacia, Sarmatia, and the Crimea, eastward, as far as the north side of the Caucasus, and towards the extreme north as far as the coasts of the Baltic.

Even if the Goths did not derive, their origin, nor emigrate directly from Sweden, yet their connection with this extreme north, even as far as Sweden itself, is by several circumstances placed beyond doubt. Their sway and influence extended also deep into the interior of Germany; the south-eastern parts especially became now Gothic, even if they were not partially so before. In the Austria of the present day, along the Danube from Vienna to Passau, was the Rugiland, so called from the Rugians, a Gothic people. From this quarter Odoacer issued forth, at the exhortation of a celebrated Christian bishop, to put an end even in name to the Roman dominion, which in reality had long ceased to exist, and to substitute in its place a Gothic-German empire. These Gothic inhabitants of Austria have indisputably exercised considerable influence on the Austrian race; and it is not to be doubted that this race is, for the most part, of Gothic descent.

The history of the partition into two, of the great Gothic kingdom on the Black Sea; of the defeat of Ermanaric, then upwards of a hundred years of age, by the invading Huns; of the subsequent alliance of this people with the Ostrogoths; of the conquest of Rome by Alaric, somewhat more than four hundred years after Christ; of the foundation,

by the kindred nations of the Goths, of a Burgundian kingdom in eastern Gaul, a Visigothic in western Gaul and Spain, and a Vandal one in Africa; of Attila, bred himself among the Goths, and achieving his victories for the most part by Gothic-German tribes, and of the terror he struck into Italy and Gaul by his immense hordes; of the great Theodoric, and his subsequent reign in Italy, glorious and wise as that of the best of the Roman emperors,—the history of all these events and personages is in itself very remarkable. But as these kingdoms rapidly passed away, the events we have thus summed up are not, on the whole, so important as the character of the Gothic nation, and the relations of its conquests and sway to the great interests of mankind, and to the progress or retrogression of civilization, a subject on which we shall now proceed to offer a few necessary remarks.

## LECTURES IV. & V.

### ON THE GOTHs AND THE MIGRATION OF NATIONS TILL CHARLEMAGNE.

THAT, from the invasions of the Gothic nations, from the conquests of Alaric, and yet more from the expeditions of Attila, Rome, as well as many of the provinces, endured most of the evils that attend on wars, cannot be doubted. But when on this account the German conquerors are accused of having destroyed the civilization of the ancient world, the charge is not only exaggerated, but unfounded and unjust. In the descriptions of modern historians, whose imagination has been filled with ideas of universal desolation and destruction, the calamities attendant upon the first convulsions of those times appear very different from what they do when we consult ourselves the pages of contemporaries and eye-witnesses. Many of these, and especially several of the early Christian writers, judge even favourably of the Germans, of their humane mode of carrying on war, and their love of justice. From these opinions, and from other traits, we may presume that the German party in the Roman empire was particularly strong among the Christians. The mutual repugnance between Christian and heathen revived upon those

great changes with redoubled strength. The heathens thought they could trace the cause of Rome's downfall to the abandonment of the ancient gods; to the omission, prevalent for some time, of offering them sacrifice. The Christians, on the other hand, referred to the humanity in the mode of carrying on hostilities then practised, in comparison with the ancient system of warfare, as a proof of the beneficial influence of Christianity, for the Goths were at that time Christians.

Even on their first appearance the Goths showed themselves not only a brave and victorious people, but even to a surprising degree more civilized than the earlier-known Germanic nations on the Rhenic frontier were at that time. The readiness of the Goths to receive the doctrines of Christianity, and the rapid diffusion of it among them, may with reason be cited as a proof of their civilization, and capacity for civilization. For among them Christianity was not introduced by force, as happened afterwards among other German nations, or by the sudden conversion of a sovereign, whose example then carried the whole nation along with him; but the faith was diffused among them in the same manner as it was in the beginning, and always should be, viz. by missions and by the influence of the doctrine. We know as little in detail of the circumstances under which Christianity became so universally spread in a short space of time among all the Gothic nations, as of the establishment, step by step, of their great kingdom on the Black Sea. Not those Gothic tribes only who were settled in the Roman empire, but also those that inhabited the Austria of the present day, were Christians. Even among the Thuringians, the remotest Gothic nation towards the interior and north-west of Germany, was Christianity, if not universally established, yet known and diffused; while in the north the Saxons remained for several centuries longer ignorant of and disinclined to its doctrines. This rapid and universal spread of Christianity amongst all the Gothic nations is also a proof of the internal communication among them, and of an effective, universal, national connection of the whole Gothic race.

The influence of Christianity upon national relations will be best illustrated by an example, which will at the same time place vividly before us the manners of the time. When the gates of Rome were opened to the armies of Alaric, the

Gothic soldiers entering dispersed themselves through the town, and some fell to plundering. One of them found some gold and silver vessels at the house of a Christian woman; she told him they belonged to the holy apostle Peter, and had been given to her to keep for the church; he might now do with them what he thought proper. This the Goth reported to the king. Alaric immediately despatched a party to the house to secure the precious vessels, and had them solemnly conveyed back to the Basilica. The Christian Romans, delighted at this proof of clemency, attended the procession and chanted the ecclesiastical hymns customary on such festive occasions. The heathens likewise followed, in the hope of obtaining greater safety. The Gothic warriors, astonished at this unexpected spectacle, joined also in the procession, and thus a common faith diffused sentiments of peace, and set limits to the rage of war.

It is true that the opinion of many contemporaries is more unfavourable to particular German tribes; they paint the calamities of those wars in gloomier colours. It would, however, be difficult to cite from the historical authorities for the times of this great northern migration, which we are apt to consider an epoch of unceasing devastation, even one single act, which for real, genuine barbarism may be compared with the systematic cruelty and devastation of which the Romans were often guilty. Their treatment of Tarentum, of Carthage, of Corinth, where they destroyed the most beautiful ancient monuments and works of art (not to speak of many others of the most splendid cities of antiquity), occurred, too, at times which we regard as civilized, and comparatively as the most flourishing and the best of ancient Rome! It is undeniable that during the Gothic wars many monuments of art perished. The same things occurred long before during the internal commotions under the emperors, and even in the time of the republic, before conquests by the Germans were even thought of. From the ignorance of such subjects prevalent among the multitude in all times, even the most civilized, it is an inevitable circumstance in every war that the monuments of antiquity and of art are not all preserved, as we might wish; not to speak of other unhappy chances of destruction. It is well known that the destruction of many ancient objects of art is to be ascribed to a very different

time and cause. When Christianity became the predominant religion, when many heathen temples were suddenly converted into Christian churches, it may have easily happened that this, like every great change, however beneficial, worked out by the hands of man, was attended by a false zeal. This may have doomed to destruction many images of gods, that we are now accustomed to regard as sacred objects of art, but which at that time, for the great bulk of heathens, were objects of a very different kind of veneration, and for that very reason were held in horror by the Christians. If, moreover, we judge less from an exclusive predilection for the fine arts, and look more to the whole range of human culture, we cannot deny that the writings and scientific knowledge of the Romans must have attracted the attention of the Germans infinitely more than their statues. And this was abundantly the case. In this respect, the charge that the Germans destroyed the ancient intellectual culture is particularly unjust and unfounded. The Roman and the Grecian intellect had been indeed long extinct; how then could the Germans destroy what was no longer in existence? Where at that time were writers of any real distinction; where any Roman literature or learning at all to be found, except among the great ecclesiastical writers of the fourth and fifth centuries? The whole inheritance of the better literature and knowledge of the Romans remained at that time almost exclusively in the hands of the Christian clergy. The Germans, far from destroying or undervaluing this inheritance of knowledge and literature, at once Christian and Roman, received it with the greatest reverence: preserved, diffused, and, as far as the times permitted, even augmented these literary treasures. The cultivation of the soil, the material well-being of the country, were so little destroyed by the Germans, that, in the reign of Theodoric, agriculture, under the fostering care of the new government, began quickly to flourish again, and, in a short time, Italy required no longer any importation of corn.

The diversity we have mentioned, in the opinion of contemporaries, as to the system of conquest adopted by the Germanic nations, their conduct and character, is a confirmation of what we have before remarked, that there were two parties at that time in the Roman empire; one favourably

disposed, and the other hostile, to the Germans. Besides the evident predilection of several Christian writers, and of many influential Christians in general, it may be inferred from many circumstances, that there was less repugnance to the Germans in the Western, than in the Greek empire. This is not perhaps to be altogether ascribed to the influence of Stilico, that German, who at the commencement of the Gothic wars, as chief functionary of the empire, guided the helm of the state under Honorius. This circumstance may be explained by the old and very frequent commercial and colonial intercourse existing between the Germans and the Western Romans still more by the difference of character between the Greeks and the Romans. At this time, as in antiquity, the Greeks, in learning, acuteness, subtlety, and artificial polish of mind, indisputably surpassed the Romans, as well as all other European nations. The vulgar portion among the Greeks were extremely conceited, and vain of these advantages, even in the elder and better times, and infinitely more so in their then state of degeneracy. They despised and hated all who were not of their nation, the more strongly, the deeper they were themselves sunk in degeneracy, and reduced to a state of ignominious dependence and degradation. The Romans, on the contrary, had been early taught to prize other virtues and qualities more influential in real life, far higher than all the feats of intellect, that displayed the utmost acuteness in the most exquisite of languages, or reached the highest refinement in the recreative arts. Hence, from their homelier and severer view of life, and of the dignity of man, they may well have formed a very different and far more favourable judgment of the Germans, as they then were, than did the Greeks.

We must not attribute an un-Roman sentiment, or a want of patriotism, to those Christians who were more favourably disposed towards the Germans. There was no question of a rooting out of the Roman language and manners, such as perhaps Attila alone meditated, but merely of a change, that had been long recognised as necessary, in the institutions of state and in the government. These in fact were growing more and more paralyzed, till they almost ceased to act, long before Germanic rule was substituted in their place. If the Christians saw in this dominion, as was undoubtedly the case, the only means of health and safety for the state, and eagerly

grasped at it, they were therein by no means to be blamed; and in this respect and in this sense it may be even admitted, and with truth asserted, that Christianity facilitated the overthrow of the Roman empire.

This diversity of opinion, however, among contemporaries as to the great northern migrations, ought to draw our especial attention to the *marked* differences that existed between the individual events and epochs, as circumstances varied. Rome suffered little or nothing from the conquest of Alaric, the Visigothic king; for, of all the Germanic nations, the Visigoths seem altogether the most favourably disposed towards the Romans, whom they even subsequently supported against Attila, as well as at other times against other Germanic people.

What a contemporary writer tells us of the sentiments of the Visigothic king Adolph deserves in this respect to be quoted.

King Adolph said, "He had desired nothing so much as that the whole country of the Romans should become Gothic, and be also so named; that all that had constituted the Roman should then become the Gothic empire, and he, Adolph, should be now what the emperor Augustus had formerly been. As long experience, however, had convinced him that it was not possible to accomplish this scheme with the Goths, from their extreme love of freedom, but that the empire must still be maintained and its laws upheld, he had proposed to himself, and would place his honour therein, to restore and even augment the glory of the Romans by the power of the Goths; and, as he was unable to found a new state in room of the old one, he yet wished posterity to regard him as the restorer of the Roman empire!"

Very different, however, from Alaric and Adolph was Genseric, king of the Vandals in Africa, who also took Rome. He sought not to retain either Rome or Italy, or to settle there; his object was merely to enfeeble the enemy in that quarter; to amass plunder, and return home; a policy which always gives a far more destructive character to war. He was also personally of a tyrannical disposition, as well as his uncle Attila. The wars of the latter must have been the more desolating, the more numerous his immense armies were: especially as they were composed of many different nations, of whom several were not German, like Attila himself, were still fagan, and incomparably ruder, or at least stranger to the



Romans than the Germans of that period. Wars are ever more cruel, more destructive, and in every way more lastingly oppressive in their consequences, in proportion as the armies are larger and more heterogeneous, and the belligerent nations stranger to each other. The Romans and the Germans at that time were anything but strangers to each other. For centuries, by a common military service, by trade, by colonies, and treaties, they had been acquainted and familiarized with each other. Even if we could not infer the fact from many particular circumstances and statements, we might well assume, from the whole state of international relations, that many Germans understood Latin, and many Romans German. The intermixture of the two languages had even then commenced, of which we see the effects at this day, as in our tongue about as many Latin words have been adopted as there are found German words in the new languages of Latin origin, the Italian, Spanish, and French. Even in manners and dress there occurred a certain free interchange and mutual adoption by the one people, of the mode of living of the other. At a time when the empire was not yet conquered, but when German influence was very preponderant, the Romans began to assume the German dress. A Roman author, on the other hand, complains that the Goths, of whom many at that time were invested with the senatorial dignity, although they indeed wore the Roman toga when they sat in council, would resume their furs as soon as they quitted the assembly, and ridiculed the toga, on account of their being unable to wear the sword with it. Remarkable as to the relations between the two people is the expression of the author we have before cited, and who lived at the period of the first convulsions, at the very commencement of the great northern migrations. "The Germans," says he, "have at once laid aside their swords, and put their hands to the plough; they now regard and love the Romans as friends and allies, and there are also already many Romans who prefer living among the Germans in freedom, although in a state of rude simplicity, than as before, in perpetual anxiety from the exactions of the old government."

But if the relations between the Goths and the Romans exhibited anything but a state of absolute and unmitigated hostility, Attila, on the other hand, appears to have been

animated with an especial hatred against the Romans. Attila's kingdom was of great extent; taking, as the centre, the whole extensive country of the Danube, the ancient Pannonia, and Dacia, together with the provinces bordering on the Black Sea, it stretched thence eastward to the Caspian and northwards to the Baltic; from the Persian frontiers, therefore, to the point where the Baltic divides the German coast from Sweden. How widely Attila's influence spread over the interior of Germany, how many German nations he ruled, we may easily discover by glancing over the roll of his immense army at the battle in the Catalanian fields. He seems indeed to have contemplated a universal union, if not of all German, yet of all Gothic people. With especial animosity did he war against those Germans who sided with the Romans rather than with the savage conqueror himself, for Rome he hated above all things. The great battle in Gaul indeed was fought almost exclusively between German nations! The Huns formed but the smaller part of Attila's army; and the great deeds of Aetius and the Romans consisted chiefly in keeping alive the hostility between the partisans and the opponents of Attila, and in looking on while the Germans mutually destroyed each other in this contest.

Attila has been painted by some as a mere savage tyrant, as even in person a mis-shapen Calmuck; some moderns, on the other hand, on account of his hatred for degenerate Rome, have made him somewhat arbitrarily a lofty avenger of mankind, burning with the love of justice. The description of his person, certainly a very unfavourable one, rests, however, only on the authority of an author who is not free from suspicion of partiality against the Huns. Be that as it may, Attila was no coldly-calculating, systematic conqueror, but rather swayed by caprice, cruel or unexpectedly clement, as his mood might be; this is evinced especially in his great invasions of Italy and Gaul towards the close of his life. He remained, as did most of the Huns, devoted to Paganism, while the Goths were Christians; in other respects he had enjoyed the benefit of a Gothic education. The influence of the Huns is in general altogether exaggerated. Their victory over the aged Ermanaric, on their first arrival from Asia, effected a change in the dynasty, rather than in the state, which on the whole, even under Attila, remained Gothic. Room enough there

may have still been for new settlers in those regions, and thus we see for the two first generations after the first irruption of the Huns down to the time of Attila, Goths and Huns living there on a footing of equality. Of this the best proof is that the Ostrogoths retained their own kings, the offspring of Ermanaric and his brothers, of the old, great, much celebrated Gothic-heroic family of the Amali. Even in Attila's time, and under him, three brothers of this family reigned together as joint kings. Attila's power was the result of his personal energy and greatness. We do not find that even under him Huns had any preference over Goths; we find more German than non-German names among his heroes, the princes and grandees of his kingdom. After him the nation of the Huns, who never were very numerous, became of still less influence; some of his sons returned to Asia, others remained among the Goths. This occurred without any great, general, or sanguinary revolution; everything fell back quietly into its natural state, when the great man—great at least by his energy and self-reliance—who had made his nation of importance, was no more. In the one point of faith he remained a Hun, but that in all else his breeding and mode of life were rather those of a Goth, is from one circumstance in particular apparent. We have the express testimony of an eyewitness that in Attila's court, not the Hunnish but the Gothic was spoken as the prevailing language. When, therefore, we are told the remarkable fact, that Attila sought utterly to eradicate the Roman language, and, on the other hand, to render the Gothic universal, we must not, as did some of the elder Hungarian writers, refer this to the Hunnish, or, according to their assumption of the relationship and unity of the two nations, the Huns and Hungarians, to the Hungarian language; but we must understand it quite literally of the Gothic, the German language of that time. Attila, however, understood the language of the Romans, or rather that corrupt dialect of it spoken in these provinces, and which was called the Ausonian. Thus, while his tents resounded to Gothic minstrels, in which the fame of the conqueror himself, or the deeds of the heroes of old, were celebrated, buffoons would at other times amuse the great king and his court with all sorts of jests and drollery, carried on in the Italian or so-called Ausonian language. From this use of the language we may infer that a certain contempt for

it was felt, just as the senseless design of Attila to root it out altogether—a design entertained by no other German conqueror and king—proves his unbounded hatred of everything Roman, and the strange caprice that in this respect swayed him.

Far more tolerable, therefore, was the commencement and the first epoch of these northern migrations, if we confine the term to the period of what was really the last convulsions of the Roman empire, occasioned by all these conquests of the Visigoths, under Alaric and Adolph, a nation that was the most friendly of all to the Romans. Incomparably fiercer and more destructive were the conquests during the middle period, under Genseric the Vandal and Attila; but very favourable, again, to civilization, was the last epoch of Ostrogothic rule in Italy, in the time of the great Theodoric. The conquests and the government of the Goths were based more upon love of fame than on avarice. They had well conceived the idea of the Roman empire, perceptible even in its extreme decay; and this empire, upon the establishment and under the mild influence of Christianity, must have appeared in a totally new light, as a great universal league that was to embrace all Christian and civilized peoples under the supreme direction of an imperial protectorate, but with the full recognition of the freedom of the several nations. This spirit is perceptible among most of the Gothic rulers. Hence their mildness. For when a conqueror is penetrated with some lofty idea, and seeks the general weal rather than any petty and special advantages; when he is not animated by avarice, but by a genuine love of glory, his sway is mild and favourable to individual freedom, which he willingly tolerates, for he looks only to national greatness. A very different feeling prevailed subsequently among the Franks; and it was precisely this more generous sentiment, this free system of rule and of conquest, that was one of the main causes of the Gothic sway being of short duration. It would probably have lasted longer, had it been from the beginning more grasping and severe, like that of the Franks. With these sentiments of clemency and freedom did the great Theodoric, who was brought up in the metropolis of Greece, reign in Italy, over southern Germany, as well as Provence and the eastern countries of the Danube. He preserved the

friendship of the Byzantine emperors, and even acquired influence over all the kings and states of Germanic origin in western Europe. Like Charlemagne in after-times, he showed his solicitude for the preservation of the literary treasures inherited from antiquity, for the intellectual wants of a period troubled by war, by his very beneficial institutes of education. Here also he evinced his true liberality, for he was equally solicitous for the Roman and the Gothic language and literature. He was not disposed, like Attila, madly to eradicate the language of the ancient world, and with it so much of its civilization; nor yet, like many other German sovereigns of that time, to forget, for this foreign Roman civilization, his national language and manners. With reason, then, in the traditions and poetry of Germany, has this refined but yet daring and valiant hero been celebrated and glorified, down even to later times; and it was even during his reign that in Boethius and Cassiodorus the last spark appears of the old Roman literature, before the language had become essentially changed. This great king, although he flourished before the Frankish Charlemagne, may well be called a Roman-German emperor, as he was one in his sentiments, and even such in reality.

Had Theodoric's successors possessed qualities like his; had the sovereignty of the Goths endured; had they then accomplished what Charlemagne only some centuries later began and founded, and the Saxon emperors consummated—the true restoration, namely, or rather renovation, of the Western empire as a league, a universal league, if possible, of European nations—then would European civilization have revived several centuries earlier, and much would have assumed a milder and freer form than under the sway of the Franks, who were at first an incomparably ruder people.

Besides excessive freedom, there were several other causes for the short duration of the dominion of the Goths. The principal was their subdivision into several great kingdoms and nations, as well as their mutual wars. We are not told, indeed, that the different Gothic nations, before their settlement in the Roman empire, were as disunited among themselves as the western Germans were even in earlier times. As soon, however, as the Goths took possession of the Roman empire, there arose various disputes and complicated relations between

countries geographically separate, such as Pannonia, Italy, Gaul, and Spain—disputes springing from the varying predilection or antipathy of the individual peoples and princes to the Romans; and thus it was but too easy for the crafty art of the Byzantine ministers to foment and perpetuate discord among the Goths. It was an important fact, too, that the Goths, though Christians, belonged to the Arian party. But as the Catholics predominated everywhere in the Roman empire, this division contributed not a little to withdraw a necessary and indispensable support from the government of the Goths.

The last nation, and, if not Gothic, it was at least closely allied, and perhaps even intermixed with the other Gothic nations, which settled in this direction in the southern provinces of the Western empire, were the Lombards. In the first century they had been compelled, by the inroads of the Romans, to retire from their seats in the most north-western part of Germany towards the east. It is certain that, subsequently and immediately before they conquered the north of Italy, and founded there the kingdom of Lombardy, they dwelt more to the southward, on the Danube, exactly in the Austria of the present day. The earliest German inhabitants of this district were called the Quadians. These the Roman authors assign to the Suabian stock, to which they usually refer those eastern German nations, with whom they were but little acquainted. We afterwards find here in Rugiland, as it was called (the country between Vienna and Passau), the Rugians, then the Herulians, both undoubtedly Gothic nations, and finally the Lombards. We must not suppose that one of these nations had wholly expelled or destroyed the other. In these cases it is only a question of fresh settlements and predominant influence. Thus when Austria was subsequently in part devastated, in part subjugated, by eastern non-German, and still heathen nations, it is not to be believed that the German population of the country was wholly exterminated; and hence, the greater part of the actual population is to be derived from the Gothic race of those ancient times.

When the Lombards penetrated from Austria into Italy, they were Arian Christians, like all the other Gothic nations; but as many other, even non-German and still heathen tribes,

were leagued with them, their conquest and sway were thereby rendered more destructive and oppressive. To this we must add the tediously protracted wars with the Greeks, of which, as of so many others in ancient and modern times, that beautiful land, which, in Petrarca's words, the Apennines divide and the sea embraces, was the theatre.

To show how little on the whole the great northern migrations were injurious to agriculture and the material prosperity of the country, which, after all, form the foundation of all civilization, one striking proof may be brought. We see each Roman province, as soon as it falls under the sway of the Germans, revive with visible energy; on the other hand, those territories which the Greeks recovered from the Germans, such as Africa and Italy, at first altogether, and afterwards at least in great part, sank again into a state of indescribable impotence and general misery. "Not the barbarians," says an able historian, "but the Romans themselves have ruined Italy." "After the wars of the Goths and the Greeks," he says, in another passage, "Italy endured at last the hardest fate of all, that of becoming a province to the Byzantine empire!" And again, "Rude as were the Lombards, yet the state of Grecian Italy, which became visibly poorer and more depopulated, was more disorganized than that of Lombard Italy."

The history of the Greek empire is altogether the best apology for the Germanic nations, and for the whole northern migration. How can we believe that this was a misfortune for mankind, that it was injurious to civilization, when we look at the history of Italy, Spain, France, England, and even Germany itself, from the fifth to the fifteenth century, when we compare the peculiar national development, the fulness of life, the stir, the activity, that in those countries were quickly manifested even in commerce and industry, in art and science, with the mournful monotony pervading the history of the Byzantine empire. This empire we behold powerless and miserable, degenerate, without true life, and languishing for a thousand years until it finally perishes; and yet, in comparison with the western nations, the advantage in respect to intellectual culture was wholly and entirely on the side of the Byzantine Greeks. As the ancient Greeks had possessed a decided superiority over the Romans in every branch of learning and literature, there was

concentred in the metropolis of the Byzantine empire a treasure of knowledge inherited from the past incomparably greater than anything that could be found in the west. But this knowledge was wholly confined to the metropolis; the provinces were in a state of indescribable barbarism, and it remained a lifeless treasure, of which they knew not how to make use. But how very different and what nobler fruits did the incomparably smaller heritage of Roman literature, such as the Germans found and received in Rome and the provinces, bear among the western nations! This dead treasure of Grecian knowledge was never turned to account, till it was grasped by the vigorous intellect of the middle age, when it had reached its maturity, and when, on the destruction of the Greek empire, the seeds of that literature were scattered on the fertile soil of the free west. It is easy to understand why that new and peculiar mental culture, that some centuries later was developed among the western nations, did not at once spring up; that we see not, immediately after the first convulsions, the flowers and fruits of the new creation. The original elements were too heterogeneous, out of which were to proceed in time the intellectual form and shape of modern Europe. German poetry, such as the northern nations brought with them in all their sagas, recollections and customs to their new settlements; Christianity, as they received it from the Romans, and finally all the treasures that yet remained of the history, the sciences, and the arts of heathen antiquity, these elements were too heterogeneous to be at once combined into a new and living whole. Even in later times it has been often difficult to fuse the diverse elements of our civilization into a perfect and harmonious unity.

Concluding our remarks on these southern migrations of the German nations, effected chiefly by the Goths, and from the east, we shall now direct our attention to those from the north.

The Franks and the Saxons, peoples of kindred race, and both from the north-west of Germany, were still heathens, when they took possession of Gaul and Britain. Rapidly and at once were the Franks converted, after the example of their king, to Christianity, and as they themselves had received it in this compulsory manner, so in turn did they impose it by force on the Alemanni, and subsequently on the German Saxons. It was Catholic Christianity



they embraced, and this gave them an immediate and great advantage over the Arian Goths. They were ruder than most of the German nations we have been hitherto describing; but oppressive as their yoke may in many respects have been, yet the vast energy displayed by the country immediately after the first immigration, when compared with the feebleness into which it had sunk in the times of the last Roman emperors, proves at least that even the Frankish was better than the old Roman sway. Even Clovis was a systematic conqueror. Together with northern, and the greater part of the rest of Gaul, he subdued all the independent Frankish princes still remaining, the Alemanni, and most of the Thuringians. Despite hereditary partitionings, these conquests were continued, extended, and rounded off by his successor step by step, and according to their geographical situation. Thus were southern Gaul and the remainder of the Visigothic kingdom incorporated with the Frankish dominions by force of arms. All ancient Gaul could now be rightly called France,\* and in the interior of Germany Frankish influence became very considerable, when the conquest of Thuringia and of Bavaria was completed, although their inhabitants remained in many respects free, and their dukes powerful. The same may be said of northern Italy, even before Charlemagne extended his conquests in this direction, and completed the circumference of the empire. The succession of the Merovingian kings, their partitions and reconstructions of the kingdom, and their disputes, are not on the whole or in their consequences particularly instructive. One would almost believe, on reading the history and the character of both these Frankish dynasties, the Merovingian and the Carlovingian, that certain qualities, that virtues and vices, were hereditary in families. In the history of the former we find, until their energies were wholly extinguished, hardly anything else than a continual picture of vice and tyranny, of unheard-of cruelty and wild revenge, which, inherited as in the families of Atreus and Thystes, even engendered fresh crimes. The latter, from the very commencement of the dynasty, from Pepin to its extinction, were distinguished by an especial attachment to religion, which certainly is not to be attributed to policy alone, but in part at least to inward conviction. If discord and revenge may be thus engrafted, can thus grow afresh, it is conceivable that

\* That is, kingdom of the Franks.

moral principles likewise, though they may not always secure against weakness and passion, may, in proportion as their value is tested by time, become a predominant mode of thought and a second nature in princely houses. Not always in themselves absolutely praiseworthy, yet in comparison with the Merovingians, must the Carolingians appear the better race to every unprejudiced mind.

For general history, the most important event of all was the gradual development of the Frankish constitution, which even in the time of the Merovingians exercised much influence over Germany, and which alone explains the rise of the Carolingian dynasty, and its advance from the dignity of major-domo to that of the restored empire.

In the new state of things the old Germanic constitution necessarily underwent very essential changes. For a not very numerous people of one and the same race it might have been excellent; but now its simplicity was no longer always adequate to the exigencies of the times, nor, from the mere vastness of the country and the diversity of the population, capable of being acted on. In the old Germanic constitution there was in reality but one order. As the hereditary right of the princes was not exactly defined, as their power was moderate, and the election of the dukes free, the princes themselves were not separated from the nobles by any insuperable barrier; they approximated closely to each other; and the order of freemen, too, was more a degree, than a different and wholly separate class. The freemen indeed originally possessed the rights of nobility, namely, that of bearing arms, that of assisting armed at the Diets, and that of vindicating themselves their outraged honour; rights which were deemed in most countries in after-times the exclusive privilege of the nobility. After the great conquests were effected and consolidated, the state of things became very different. The kings were now grown powerful, and were no longer mere princes, the first and highest of the nobles and people, but appeared as monarchs, surrounded by hitherto unwonted pomp, and wholly separated from other men. The most important change, however, was that in the order of freemen. In them lay the reality, the energy of the nation, for they were the foundation and the strength of the *arrière-ban*, or general military levy. The order of freemen, and

with it the *arrière-ban*, fell into decay and neglect, because the principles and proceedings of the conqueror are, in their effects, as injurious to internal freedom as they are dangerous to the safety of his neighbours, when his mind is not bent on great objects, but only on constant and gradual aggrandizement of his immediate possessions; when he is more covetous of wealth than really ambitious of fame.

Two kinds of military association and military service existed among the ancient Germans; the *arrière-ban*, or national armament, and the feudal service of the liegemen, noble attendants, or, as they soon began to be called, vassals, bound personally to the king or prince. On partitioning a conquest, the king would naturally bestow the best and richest shares upon his companions; hence these liegemen of the king became extremely powerful. The one element of the old Germanic constitution thereby obtained a disproportionate preponderance; and the old national nobility was displaced by a new feudal and ministerial nobility, whose interests and feelings were different from those of the people, and who were devoted to the person of their liege lord alone. The other element in the old constitution—the order of freemen—lost in proportion as the ascendancy of these feudatories of the king gained ground. Some by compulsion surrendered their freedom, and became vassals; others did so voluntarily, in order to be free from the *arrière-ban*; for when summoned thereto, the warrior had to maintain himself at his own expense; and this service was more burdensome and oppressive in proportion to the size of the kingdom. The very means, however, whereby the power of the king was at first so much increased, occasioned it to be secretly undermined, and at last reduced to a mere shadow. In proportion as the feudatories and vassals of the king grew all-powerful, it was more practicable for the chief of them, the governor of the palace and court of the king, when the latter was a weak man, to become the virtual monarch. In this manner was the first dynasty of the Merovingians expelled by the major-domo, whose office had become hereditary. The new-raised dynasty produced in Pepin of Heristal, in the victorious Charles Martel, and in the sagacious King Pepin the First, such a series of heroes and energetic rulers, that perhaps no great man in history had his path so prepared for him as Charle-

magne. The reproach of usurpation can the less be made against the ancestors of Charlemagne, as the commencement of their power was quite constitutional. The kingdom of the Franks, moreover, was originally not strictly hereditary, although the first Merovingians appear to have sought to treat it as such; they ruled indeed in general with harshness, severely oppressed the people, and imitated more and more the corruption and the manners of the later Romans. But the rights of the people were still fresh in their memory, and by their free election, according to the old Frankish law, the ancestors of Charlemagne, as dukes, protectors, and friends of the people and of freedom, attained to that supreme power, which, as it had been long founded on a constitutional basis, finally received in the ecclesiastical sanction its supreme confirmation. Of the conquests of Charlemagne, it has been truly remarked that in extending the Frankish empire from the Eider to Rome, from the Ebro to the Raab, and even beyond, he merely completed what had been commenced several generations before. As in Spain, by the Margrave of Barcelona, he secured the frontier against the restless Mahomedan foe; so in the opposite quarter, by advancing the empire into eastern Germany, as far as the Raab, he reunited Austria to it; Austria, which then was the extreme frontier, was in after-times to become in so many respects the centre of Germany.

The army which Charlemagne inherited from his predecessors was strong and well disciplined. To form a judgment of him as a general, we ought to be better acquainted with his adversaries, and know what they were in this respect. Against the Arabs in Spain, and the Saxons in Germany, his warfare was not always successful; in the one case he effected his object very imperfectly, in the other the contest ever broke out afresh.

Charlemagne's cruel treatment of the subjugated Saxons, on whom Christianity was forcibly imposed, is rather to be excused than defended. The wars waged for several generations between the Saxons and Franks may have greatly inflamed the national hatred of the two peoples, and it was the more bitter, perhaps, because both were of a nearly kindred stock. The wild fanaticism of the Mahomedans, who regarded the propagation of their creed by force of arms as a

sacred duty, necessitated the Christian warriors to a defence of their faith, and hence a spirit of bitterness may have been too easily transferred to the wars against all non-Christian peoples. Towards the heathen nations this was very unjust, since against the Mahomedans alone would the right of self-defence and retaliation be at all applicable, and justify a religious war.

Charlemagne's first peace with the Saxons was more just in its provisions than the subsequent ones. He may have had their subjugation much at heart, as it was indispensable for the accomplishment of his plans. Judging from the choice of Aix-la-Chapelle for his capital, and from the castles he erected for his residence, from Ingélheim, near Mayence, to Nymwegen, he wished to make the fertile districts along the great navigable river between France and Germany—he wished to make the Rhenish provinces, the old cradle of the Franks, the centre of his vast monarchy. And it is not to be doubted that their high civilization, which speedily surpassed that of any other German provinces, is attributable chiefly to him and his prescient care. But to secure the Rhineland as the centre of the whole empire, it was necessary to extend the northern frontier, and to subdue the Saxons in Germany; and it was easily foreseen that they would never be tranquil till they were converted to Christianity.

It will ever remain a reproach, however, against Charlemagne, and against the Franks in general, that on several occasions they adopted means for the diffusion of Christianity so little congenial with its spirit. Very different in this respect were the proceedings and the mode of thinking of the Anglo-Saxons in Britain. This German colony of Saxons in England differed remarkably from the kingdom established by the kindred nation of the Franks, and the disadvantage of the comparison is almost always on the side of the latter. The immigration of the Saxons into England, which was continued for a long space of time, was incomparably more numerous than that of the Franks; so that the whole population in the most fertile parts of the island, the south and east, became purely Germanic and Saxon. For a considerable time the Saxons in their new seats remained still heathens; it was then occurred those wars of the Christian and Celtic

king Arthur against the Saxons, which became afterwards so celebrated in the lays of chivalry. • When once the Saxons, however, were converted to Christianity (and this change was brought about, not by compulsion, but by the preaching of missionaries sent from Rome), Britain soon became most remarkably distinguished above all other provinces of the west, above France, even above Italy, in literary knowledge, such as was then to be found, and in general intellectual culture. Not by the sword did the Anglo-Saxons propagate Christianity, like the Franks, but many Christian teachers among them, leaving their tranquil dwelling-places in England, penetrated into the wilder districts of the interior of Germany and of Switzerland, there with heroic self-devotion to teach the doctrines of religion. Vast services did they also render to those countries by the diffusion of knowledge, by the softening of manners, and even by the tillage of the soil. How nobly the old Germanic constitution was maintained and developed among the Saxons is best proved by the fact, that many of the best institutions in the famous English constitution are derived from those times, and from the Saxons. Alfred rises superior to his age incomparably more than Charlemagne to his; and the comparison might terminate altogether unfavourably to the latter, if, instead of judging by the extent of power, and the splendour of empire, we were to contemplate only the quiet greatness of the man. We should then place by the side of Charlemagne the pious king Alfred, constant and unwearied under misfortune, cheerful amid his sorrows; as a minstrel visiting the camp of the foe, as a herdsman wandering unknown among his own people; and when success and victory had crowned his courageous efforts, and he beheld his country saved, still preserving moderation in all things; mild and humble, he who knew so much that is scarcely allowed to his times, who had founded so many wise and beneficial institutions, that even still excite the admiration of mankind.

Charlemagne's sphere of action was greater, and the consequences of his actions and the results of his institutions were greater for all Europe. However much of his military fame may be due to his predecessors, a great and clear understanding is visible in all his own measures, even those for the administration of his property. As a lawgiver, per-

haps, he most deserves our admiration, and his influence as such was felt for centuries. He is to be regarded as the founder of the constitution of the three estates, and of the system of polity of all succeeding ages, even down to our own. From him was derived the idea of the empire, as it was understood in the middle ages, as that of Christendom, or the ecclesiastical confederation of all the western nations. The influence he has exerted over all Europe for a thousand years, as a lawgiver, is so important, that it requires separate consideration. In the first place, however, we must for a moment contemplate his own age, and what he accomplished for its scientific and mental culture. .

The attention he bestowed on all the monuments and relics of ancient art in Italy, the friendship in which he lived with the learned Englishman Alcuin, the association into which he entered with him and some other scholars, and in which he assumed the name of King David, and one of the others that of Homer, dispose us to form a favourable judgment of him. The Latin schools he founded in every quarter, as far as circumstances permitted him, served to perpetuate and diffuse more generally whatever knowledge had been handed down to his times from the nations of antiquity. But his efforts to rescue from oblivion, and to reanimate the national language and poetry of Germany, excite our curiosity the more, as the documents he gathered together with this object have been lost. What would we not now give still to possess those old German poems, which we are told he collected, as did once Lycurgus and Pisistratus the rhapsodies of Homer, and which have excited so many wishes and inquiries! This is a circumstance so important to the history of the German mind, that I feel myself compelled to pause, and to attempt, by a few remarks, to explain what notion we ought to form to ourselves of these German poems collected by Charlemagne, or by his orders, and how far they may have perished, or may have influenced later traditions and ages, and been partially preserved, at least as to their contents, even down to our own times. Charlemagne's encouragement of the German language and poetry is as it were a fixed point of view, whence we may survey and judge the state of intellectual culture in his age. The fact, attested as it is by credible witnesses, that he did make a collection of old German lays, and draw up a German

grammar, or cause one to be drawn up, can the less be called in question, as his whole family was entirely of Low-German origin, and chiefly resided in that country. If the later kings of the first dynasty adopted with other Roman customs the corrupt Roman dialect, yet we have the most explicit testimony that at the court of the Carlovingians, not the modern Latin, but the Frankish language, which did not differ essentially from the Anglo-Saxon, predominated. Charlemagne's predilection for Germany is revealed in the choice of his residences, in the situation of the chief cities and castles he founded, and even from the direction of his conquests, which he pushed furthest and followed up most vigorously in this quarter. The rise of the Carlovingian dynasty may be considered altogether as a national reaction; for under them and through them the original manners and constitution, and therewith the language, of the Franks once more revived.

There are many traces and proofs that German poetry and the German language were revived and assiduously cultivated in the age of Charlemagne and his immediate successors. Later poets in the succeeding centuries often allude to the old heroic lays still existing in great numbers in their time. How much these were then spread is proved by the circumstance, that Charlemagne's son, Louis the Pious, out of mistaken conscientiousness, reproached himself with having loved them in his youth; and that it was found necessary to interdict the "wyne-lieder" to nuns. "Wyne" means friendship, and this interdiction we must understand as referring to such lays as were afterwards called "Minne-lieder." We still possess in Ottfried's hero-poem, "The Saviour according to the Gospels," a poetical and, with regard to the language, a very remarkable monument of the Carlovingian times. As the object of this pious man was evidently to banish the old national poetry that was but ill adapted to Christianity, and to replace it by his poetical narration of the history of Christ, we may well presume that he adopted the form of the lays he designed to set aside. And this presumption is the more natural, as we find the very same form in a beautiful triumphal song over the Normans, by a Carlovingian king Louis. • This influence of Christianity, this unceasing regard to it, even in everything that was done for the language and for poetry, is noteworthy, as it enables us to understand correctly in what spirit Charle-



Charlemagne collected those old German poems, and what their nature was. It is a noble proof of the early development of the German tongue, that translations of many theological and philosophical works of the ancients existed in it at a time when the Italian, the French, and in general all the languages derived from the Latin, still fluctuated in a barbarous state of transition between the Latin form, that was now wholly corrupt, and the modern form, that was still crude and unshaped, and in reality had no existence as defined and peculiar tongues. Among many other Christian writings of Carlovingian times in the German language, there still exists a German catechism, in which is expressly contained the question, "Dost thou renounce Woden and the Saxon Odin?" How then can we believe that, in such a state of public opinion, Charlemagne could have collected the lays of the old German poets of the heathen times, whom we incorrectly term bards? Such, for example, as the old Swedish and Danish ones of that Odip, whom the Saxons invoked with vows upon the Harz mountains for aid against Charlemagne's victorious arms, and whom they had to abjure on their subjugation. Did there still exist in oral tradition at this time any sagas and songs on Arminius, they were undoubtedly too much interwoven with heathen mythology not to have shared with it the same fate. Yet, from the whole bearing of historic records, they were indisputably heroic lays that Charlemagne collected; but certainly not from the heathen times must we look for their origin. That among the Franks in Roman Gaul, suddenly converted to Christianity as they were, any peculiar poetry should have been developed, is improbable; no trace at least of such is to be found during the whole period of the Merovingian dynasty. If then these lays were neither old Germanic and heathen, nor national Frankish popular poems, what else can we conclude them to have been, than those old Gothic hero-poems, of whose existence there are so many documentary proofs, and which, although in the later forms into which they were recast in the thirteenth century, are still preserved to us? What else are they but the heroic lays that celebrate Attila and the last Burgundian kings—the Gothic Theodoric and Odoacer—those priceless memorials of the German language and poetic spirit, which still exist under the names of the "Nibelungen-lied" and the "Heldenbuch;" the

## HEROIC SAGAS OF THE GOTHs.

memorials, that Bodmer first strove to rescue from oblivion, that Lessing laboured critically to investigate and comprehend, and whose high value and historical importance John von Müller fully recognised, proceeded from these ancient sources; poems which in their beautiful simplicity and heroic energy come nearer to the unapproachable Homer than any artificial imitations whatsoever. We may not possess these hero-poems in the forms in which they existed in Charlemagne's time, but the sagas on which they were founded, and lays of a similar purport taken from Gothic heroic story, were undoubtedly those which Charlemagne caused to be collected. We are fortunate in having preserved the echo at least of some of them, even if many have passed away for ever.

Here will be the most appropriate place to make some additional notices on the heroic sagas of the Goths.

The kingdoms founded by the Goths were but of short duration; but their fame and their memory were long cherished by the German nations, not only in historical works, but in their sagas and poetry. The bold enterprises, the unexpected revolutions, and high destinies, by which the history of the Goths is characterized, from the very foundation of their great monarchy that stretched from the Black Sea, deep into the heart of Germany, and from their settlement in the Roman empire down to their final downfall, appear to have given fresh impulse to the imagination, and to have animated with new strength the love of poetry peculiar to all the Germanic nations. The northern idolatry was retained only by the Goths in Sweden, while all their southern kinsmen had embraced Christianity. But if the names of the old gods had disappeared, yet the legends remained of spirits and of marvels, and the heroic life itself furnished matter enough for the heroic poem. It is immaterial whether the subjects of poetry belong to the present or to the past, provided only that in a life, or in a generation, imagination on the whole holds higher sway than the understanding. Then in that case is either kind of objects equally capable of exciting the imagination rather than the understanding, and of originating poetic sagas and conceptions. Even if Jornandes, the historian of the Goths, had not himself told us he had drawn a great part of his work from the Gothic heroic lays, and had merely translated them into Latin prose, we could readily

have inferred as much from the whole style and character of the book. Hence is it unreasonable to waste so much critical blame upon the work, which ought rather, if taken for what it really is, to be considered a most precious memorial and relic of the heroic sagas of German antiquity. Attila's career especially, frightful indeed as it was, but yet fascinating for the imagination, appears to have yielded rich material to the hero-poems. There still exists an old Latin poem on the revenge of his last Burgundian bride; at this period, and indeed throughout the middle age, sagas and legends were frequently transferred from the popular dialect into the more widely diffused Latin, the literary and written language of the time. The Hungarian chronicles also relate much respecting Attila, that belongs rather to the legendary than the historical, and that is to be classed with the German heroic poetry; other fragments of the kind we pass over. It is not, therefore, a mere hypothesis that the "Nibelungenlied," and the "Heldenbuch" are founded on older Gothic lays, but the fact is proved and attested by testimonies and records of various kinds.

The oldest monument of the German language that we now possess, the well-known Gothic translation of the Gospels attributed to Ulphilas, belongs to this period. Translations of Holy Writ, especially of the Gospels, are the oldest memorials of almost all modern languages, and particularly of the German dialects; a fact quite incompatible with the opinion of those, who believe that in the middle ages every effort was made to withdraw the Scriptures from the people. For knowledge of manners, and for the history of mind, an heroic poem, in which for example the misfortunes of the aged Ermanaric, the daring campaigns of many other princes, the history of the ancient royal house of the Amali, were celebrated, would be far more instructive and more welcome than these translations. Even as it is, however, they are very important. Language is, after all, the best and truest reflection of the mode of thinking, of the state of mind, and of the degree of civilization among a people. When we examine closely this Gothic dialect, identical (as appears from certain records) with that of the Ostrogoths in Italy; when we perceive, on the strangeness of the first impression wearing off, and allowing for some foreign intermixture, that

it is the foundation of our present language; when we detect in the signification, the combination, and the derivation of the words, in its beautiful and simple system of grammatical forms, and in its roots, a striking, a more than accidental similarity to the noblest and most polished languages of Europe and Asia—the Greek, the Persian, and the Indian—then is it scarcely possible for us to conceive that the ancient Germans are to be put on a level with the American savages or with the Caffres. And we can the less do so, as in the present day the languages of those savages have been accurately described, and are sufficiently known to enable us to institute a comparison, and to convince ourselves how great is the difference. It has been a subject of dispute whether this Gothic monument belongs to the Swedish language and antiquities, or to the German. In a certain sense this question is unanswerable. The Swedish, and the Scandinavian nations in general, were, originally, one and the same with the German. This monument belongs to the period when the Germans, migrating into more southern seats, were severed from the main stock; and this migration occasioned the rise of the German as a separate language, which (so to speak) is at once the sister and the daughter of the Scandinavian, or old Swedish. My meaning is this. Our German language is known to be a commixture of two very different dialects, that of upper and that of lower Germany. In the north the latter still predominates, in the country parts, as the language of the common people; for several centuries it has been no longer cultivated or developed, but in the judgment of all philologists it is the elder, original dialect. One branch only of this wide-spread dialect, the Dutch, has received in modern times any high and special culture. The close relationship of Low-German to Scandinavian or old Swedish is well known, and is especially and strikingly visible in the elder languages, such as the Anglo-Saxon, and in such dialects as have remained unmixed, as the Frisian. The Low-German dialect is a sister of the Scandinavian or old Swedish, but that of south or upper Germany is of later origin, and is not a sister, but a daughter of the latter.

Great migrations, new settlements, a new climate, and, consequent on all this, a change in all the relations of life, produce so great an alteration in a language, that new

dialects thereby spring up. When the Suabians and the Swiss, abandoning their former seats on the Baltic, settled in the south-west of Germany, as did the other Gothic tribes in the south-east, then the German language began to arise as a peculiar dialect distinct from the Scandinavian. The introduction of many foreign, especially Latin, words stamped on it additional peculiarity. The language now in general literary use, which we call High-German, is not a dialect, but has rather sprung out of the commingling and mutual modification of the two dialects we have spoken of.

We have already mentioned a great name that is too important in ancient German and northern history to be passed over in silence. All northern sagas and mythology proceed, as is known, from Odin. Although Odin, deified as he afterwards became, appears in the sagas to be a fabulous being, yet it is undeniably certain that he was a real historical personage, and that he effected a great revolution in the condition of a large portion of the German nation and of the whole north. Not only the oldest dynasty of the Danish and Swedish kings, the Skioldunger and Inglinger, were derived from Odin, but to him even the Christian Anglo-Saxon kings in Britain traced their origin. Both these traditions, quite independent of each other as they are, point to Saxony as Odin's chief seat; there was he king, and thence did he move to the north to build Sigtuna, and to found a kingdom in Sweden. On subjecting these genealogical tables to a calculation based on the average duration of human life, they agree in placing Odin's life at a rather late period, in the third or even fourth century of our era. When later Icelandic historians, who were already familiar with Roman history, bring him first out of Asia, from the Caucasus to Saxony, and refer this event to the times of Mithridates, we can only see in this a futile attempt to connect the sagas of the north with Roman history. For the first immigration of the Germans this narrative would be much too late; and for the real Odin, according to the above genealogical tables, much too early. In all historical probability, Odin was a hero and king in northern Germany; and at the same time, as the legend expressly states, a poet. As did Mahomet by the power of his eloquence and his sword, so did he also in the north, as a seer and hero, by the power

of his verse, become the founder of a new religious system and worship, or at least of one much altered and remodelled. Hence is it very conceivable that he was himself deified. But not until long after could this have happened, that he became fully confounded with the supreme God of the ancient Germans, Woden, as in the Christian catechism for the newly-converted Saxons in the time of Charlemagne he is expressly distinguished from Woden; he is also described there as peculiarly belonging to the Saxon people. In what respect the mythology of Odin, which in Sweden long resisted the advance of Christianity, differed from the more ancient religion of the Germans, it would be difficult to determine. On the whole, we see in both the existing mythological collections of the Icelanders the same worship of the spirits of nature, and the primary powers of nature, which prevailed in the earlier belief of the north. Yet the worship of water, fire, and the spirits of nature, may not perhaps have had so much spiritual significance among the older Germans. That all the details were not changed by Odin is the more certain, from the singular agreement of many individual traits with the Asiatic myths, and the conceptions of the ancient Persians and Indians. The most striking incident in the mythology of Odin is the saga respecting Balder and his death. This young and beautiful deity, whom we may compare to Apollo, is by an unavoidable destiny doomed to death; all the benignant gods and spirits strive to save him; he appears saved, when an accident destroys all, and he can no longer escape his destined doom. The lament for Balder's death is one of the chief points in Odin's mythology, and reminds us of the wailing for Adonis on his being snatched from Venus, and of the mysterious funeral commemoration of Osiris. Thor's burly giant strength reminds us also of the Hercules of the Greeks, and Loke's malevolent cunning of the Arimanes of the Persians. If the later Edda of Sturleson gives us a short but full insight into the whole mythology of Odin, the earlier one of Saemund, consisting of fragmentary poems, characterized by a mysterious, inspired, prophetic tone, gives us perhaps even in its very forms, an echo of those lays of the seers and prophetesses, with which the sacred groves of the German north often resounded.

As much as, or even more than, by his collections of old Gothic poems, did Charlemagne by his very life exert a general influence on the poetry and imagination of modern nations. As, when fancy is still vigorous, great, world-wide events, that leave nothing unchanged, usually bring about a new epoch in the general mode of thinking, in sagas and in poetry; so did he himself, even though his acts were recorded by contemporary and truthful historians, become, not long after his own times, a subject of poetry, and a fabulous personage. It is surprising that in the poems of chivalry, of which he was the subject, and whose origin is of considerable antiquity, he himself plays a very subordinate, almost inactive part. The Normans, whose romantic spirit first converted the real history of Charlemagne into a subject of poetic fiction, apparently conceived the energetic hero to resemble his successors, such as they found them, honoured, gorgeous, and well-meaning, yet far from independent, not unlike an eastern sultan.

Many reasons may be assigned for the short duration of Charlemagne's Frankish empire. What had been forcibly united by the mind and the strength of an extraordinary man soon fell asunder when the powerful hand was withdrawn which held the whole together. Yet the weakness of his successors was not the only cause of the decline and dissolution of the empire. Several of them indeed were distinguished by courage and understanding; and never did the partitions of the empire, and the disputes connected therewith, occasion such atrocities among them, as in the times of the Merovingian dynasty. On the whole, the same sound and wholesome principles of policy and moral life prevailed under his successors as under Charlemagne himself. Neither must we trace the downfall of the empire to the inroads of hostile nations alone; for as soon as internal warfare ceased, as soon as the government acquired but a little power, neither the Normans could accomplish aught against isolated France, nor the Hungarians much against Germany, so that to break up the whole empire was utterly beyond their power. It has been often a subject of wonder that Charlemagne, to whom so much sound and deep policy is attributed, should himself have ordained the partition of the empire, for only by reason of the death of his other sons did it devolve entire upon Louis the Pious. There is sufficient ground to assume

that this partitioning did not depend altogether on Charlemagne's own choice, for it was constitutional, and an old Frankish custom connected with the feudal system. It is at least remarkable, that among the Goths, to whom the feudal system prevalent among the Franks appears to have been but little known, partition of inheritances did not take place.

Under the feudal institutions, if a younger son of the king, on whom his father's love had bestowed even but a few demesnes, were brave, liberal, and high-spirited, he could easily acquire so much consideration and power by the devotedness of his vassals, that it would be necessary to cede to him voluntarily what he might otherwise have attempted to obtain by force, and so have given rise to civil wars, that even a legal partition did not always prevent. It was in his conquests themselves we must seek the main cause why Charlemagne's empire, like Alexander's of old, fell asunder soon after his own time, and resolved into its natural elements. By the very subjugation of all its northern districts, and its conversion to Christianity, did united Germany—one in its language, manners, ancient union, and constitution—become a very great power. As a mighty whole, it could no longer remain dependent on a distant ruler, as was before the case with some of its provinces. Germany's preponderating strength was manifested in the fact, that after some fluctuations and several successive changes and partitions, the lovely central Rhineland, and the northern parts of ancient Lorraine, fell ultimately to the Germans; while the southern part of the latter province became, under the ancient name of Burgundy, a new and independent kingdom, which was in after-times incorporated with the Germanic empire. These rich territories, so admirably adapted for cultivation, Burgundy, Lorraine, the Rhineland, and the Netherlands, had Charlemagne apparently destined to be even in future times the chief and central country of the whole empire; and they might have become so, had the nations and the sovereigns been united.

Even Italy, when the Lombard yoke had been broken by Charlemagne, when the Byzantine influence had been reduced to a nullity, when her unity had been to a great extent restored by the removal of so many petty subdivisions—even Italy felt herself sufficiently strong to wish for inde-



pendence, although unable to accomplish her will. After Italy, France was the country the most enfeebled; and the reason of this lay in its earlier corruption. On the other hand, the evident vigour which Germany displayed soon after Charlemagne's death leads us to conjecture that the growth of her power had early manifested itself, and makes us better understand how Charlemagne came to set such high value upon Germany, and here more than elsewhere sought to extend and uphold his sway.

In a general sketch of whole generations and of great events, those personages only should find a place who have created an epoch, who have changed the aspect of the world, and whose life embodies a world—a whole age in itself. Such characters are no longer to be found among the posterity of Charlemagne. Their destinies and their disputes, the frequent separations and reunions of France and Germany, serve only to fill up the intervening space between Charlemagne and the total severance of France and Germany; when the latter country, having freely elected a king, stood forth a distinct, independent kingdom, and soon reached the summit of power. Now was brought about that great national union of all the Germanic peoples, which in earlier times had been often sought for in vain. From this period, from the elevation of King Conrad to the throne by the election of the whole nation, down to the emperor Rodolph the First, Germany was the mightiest state of Europe; and scarcely can an example be found in history of a like, almost unbroken series of energetic heroes and great sovereigns, succeeding each other upon the throne, as in this great, free, and, for a time at least, firmly united elective empire.

## LECTURES VI. & VII.

### ON THE GERMAN EMPIRE.

THE empire which Charlemagne founded, as a conqueror, was not of long duration; but far more important in the history of the world has been his part as a lawgiver. In this respect he accomplished much for France in particular, by

striving to restore her old Frankish constitution, to uphold the *arrière-ban*, to check the undue ascendancy of the feudal nobility by laws against hereditary succession; in a word, to bring back the nobility, that fundamental power in the state, as far as altered circumstances then allowed, to their original functions. Yet are all these measures of less importance to posterity, because in after-times all these relations were variously modified, and the measures Charlemagne adopted for these objects were enforced only during his lifetime, or at most during the brief period of his dynasty. But a lawgiver he was for all succeeding times, and for all western Europe, by the manner, more especially, in which he fixed the relations of church and state, and the bond of union which he formed between them. For centuries was this union the foundation of the constitution, and even when it was partially changed, it continued to exert the most decided influence even down to our own times. The constitution of the three estates and the political institutions of the middle age first received from Charlemagne a definite form, and the notion of a Christian confederacy of all the western nations appeared visibly and plainly to be the object to which the spirit of the age directed all its efforts. Even under Charlemagne's predecessors a close and constant union was maintained between royalty and the church. Under the earlier Frankish kings the bishops already formed in the realm a separate estate; they took part, like the dukes and counts, in affairs of state, and in the public deliberations, and sat and voted in the Imperial Diets; but chiefly under Charlemagne did all this become a recognised principle, a part of the constitution, and obtain a definite form. Through him the clergy became an estate, which, as a second member of the body politic, might serve as a counterpoise to the nobility. Among the Romans the church had grown up quite independently of the state, quite separately from it; her internal institutions had been fully developed before she became predominant. Hence, even under the Christian emperors, church and state, Christianity and public life, remained quite distinct, some arbitrary intermeddling excepted. But it was quite otherwise among the Germans; when they still adhered to idolatry, they had no distinct priesthood, but all sacerdotal rights and duties were united and intermingled with the political institutions and the

national concerns. The circumstance expressly mentioned by Tacitus, that the priest of the nation was elected by the assembled people, and the influence on the other hand exerted by the priesthood upon the national judicature and national affairs, would be sufficient to satisfy us of this. This fact easily accounts for a certain mingling of ecclesiastical and civil affairs among the Germans after their conversion to Christianity; they frankly incorporated Christianity with their whole political life, and conceded to it great influence on their public concerns.

Eminently as Christianity was adapted to all nations, yet each, on first receiving it, displayed its own peculiar character in the manner of the reception and in the direction given to it. His inborn melancholy and profoundness of feeling led the Egyptian as a hermit into the rudest deserts. The Greeks brought to religious subjects the dialectical acuteness so peculiar to them, and early enough also the contentiousness connected therewith. The Romans, of a more practical turn of mind, organized the ritual requisite for the Christian mysteries with becoming dignity, and instituted a most beautiful ceremonial; and, as every society requires well-defined laws, they drew up with sagacity the rules of life necessary for the larger and smaller ecclesiastical and Christian societies. The Germans, lastly, fought like true knights for the Christian faith, when once they had embraced it, against its fanatical enemies. Moreover, instead of severing Christianity from life, as if care for eternity were a thing apart, they, with a full heartfelt sentiment of the priceless treasure they had acquired, gave a Christian organization to their whole domestic and public life, referring it to and basing it on the church. The effects of this union were soon manifested, and many examples, especially among the Franks, are found of that intermingling of ecclesiastical and civil affairs which sprang from it.

As the bishops took part in the Imperial Diets with the dukes and counts, so also were kings, dukes, and counts often present at the synods and assemblies of the clergy. Christianity and the body politic, church and state, were thoroughly united and interwoven. Charlemagne, who strove to bring back the clergy, like the nobility, to their original functions, marked out and defined as far as possible the respective lines of demarcation between civil and ecclesiastical functions, as in the imperial assemblies he divided the bishops

and the high nobility into two chambers. The clergy became thereby a peculiar order, a distinct member of the body politic; in part united to the nobility, in part separate from it, sometimes co-operating with it, sometimes limiting its exclusive influence in many ways. The inner structure and organization of the state grew now more compact; but in order to judge correctly of these institutions, and of the ideas whereon they were based, we must look back to all the circumstances and wants of those times. It is certain that the feudal and ministerial nobility, at first the support and instrument of the royal power, now often threatened it with danger. Hence for the regular and uniform security of regal authority nothing was so necessary and desirable as a permanent counterpoise to the nobles, another estate equal to them in power. The citizen-class scarcely existed as an estate, at least it was not sufficiently powerful or developed, to constitute at this period a counter-balance of any importance to the nobility. It was not until long afterwards, that the class of burgesses was added to the two others as a third estate, which thereby completed the constitution of estates; its development was not a little accelerated and furthered by the ecclesiastical order, whose objects were often distinct from the interests and the power of the nobility, or even in opposition to them.

If the nobility, which at that time, from ceaseless wars and feuds, had become altogether military, seemed to contain in itself the concentrated strength of the nation, the intelligence of the latter, whether perpetuated from antiquity or recently revived, was mainly to be found in the clergy. These were the depositaries of all the Christian knowledge, literature, and civilization, derived from Rome, and which in numberless cases the state itself needed. Contrasted with the clergy, this Christian Roman element of the state and of civilization, the nobility may be regarded as the Germanic element of the then constitution, for they were the depositaries and guardians of the primitive German manners and maxims of honour and freedom. The class of nobles and warriors, as the concentrated strength of the state, was identified with the particular state, with the particular nation, to which it belonged. But if all Christian nations were to be united into one great confederacy, into one European republic, if one common bond were to embrace them all, it was indispensable that in every state, together

with the national order; namely the nobility, another order should exist as a connecting link with the general body of Christian nations, and in order that the union might be strong and efficacious. These two estates and powers were in those times in many respects complementary of each other, and when Charlemagne (I name him because he created an epoch, as a legislator, although many of his predecessors had already acted before on the same principles, and many of his institutions were developed by one or other of his successors) based the constitution upon these two orders, upon their mutual need of each other, and on their living influences, he was not therein to be blamed. He felt himself great and powerful enough to leave free play to others, and to grant them power and honour within the limits assigned to them by nature and reason. Many of his institutions had undeniably no other object than that of confirming and extending the royal power; but like many of his ancestors, he was also a man of the people. He not only left to the nobility their hereditary rights, but he sought also to infuse fresh life into this member of the old vigorous constitution, as likewise in an especial manner to elevate the clergy, well feeling the necessities of the time. A really vital power does not repose on the destruction of all free life around it; rather will a ruler, of a powerful mind and a great soul, be stronger, the more life and free energy exist in the entire body politic.

The essential mission of the ecclesiastical order to announce God to men, and to lead them to him, is in all times unchangeably the same; but the external relation of that order can never be otherwise dependent on circumstances. This is often overlooked by those who demand that the clergy should be brought back to the condition of the primitive teachers of Christianity. If education is recognised as one of the chief objects of the clerical calling, then surely the education of nations, the softening of manners in warlike times by the cultivation of the land as well as of the mind, cannot be considered alien to the ecclesiastical mission. For this end, power, influence, and wealth were necessary. Money wealth was at that period comparatively rare, hence it was chiefly landed property by which the clergy were enriched. They were thereby still more closely linked to the state, as the Germanic constitution was chiefly based upon landed property.

Independently of the larger endowments of kings and princes, several circumstances contributed to add to the landed property of the clergy. It was a thing required by the wants of the time, and all writers with one voice proclaim how much the cultivation of the soil gained thereby, how many rugged and even desert tracts were reclaimed by the industry of monks, and converted into fertile fields. However much individual ecclesiastics may have misused the wealth accumulated by so many donations, yet on the whole the clergy, from the ninth to the thirteenth century, are fully entitled to this praise. The Benedictine order in particular acquired in all Europe the twofold glory of having preserved the better part of the works and knowledge of antiquity for the cultivation of the mind, and of having everywhere tilled and embellished the soil.

The quality of the protector of the church was regarded throughout the middle age as the essential attribute of the emperor. With reference to that free confederacy of all civilized states and peoples, which is now as much desired as then, we need only translate this term into our modern political dialect, to perceive how morally and politically great was this idea of the empire, such as Charlemagne and the better German emperors, from Otho the Great to Rodolph of Hapsburg, had conceived and realized it in all their actions. If, in the course of time, it was not always practicable to maintain peaceful relations between church and state; if, in the contests between the German emperors and the Roman see, they often alternately and mutually destroyed each other's power; yet, we must not on that account misjudge the great principle itself, for which men strove, nor the extraordinary energies of mind developed in the struggle. In modern times it has been sought to establish a free confederacy of all civilized states, and general equitable relations between them, in a very different manner, by political artifice. We must not forget that the attainment of this object by such means has been often found quite as difficult, or even impracticable, as by means of the old imperial dignity and the Papal power.

When the bishops had acquired so much influence in the state, when they had become estates of the realm, it naturally followed that the supreme bishop of Christendom should enter into new relations towards Christian states, which, though not

indeed necessarily arising from his ecclesiastical and spiritual functions, were yet by no means inconsistent with them. From of old, and as early as the first centuries, the bishop of Rome was recognised as the first and chief bishop of Christendom; that is to say, distinct testimony of his pre-eminence is to be found in those times, and this is recognised by learned Protestants themselves. The difference between them and Catholics consists herein, that Protestants, even when they do not assume, that that pre-eminence first arose at the time this testimony is found, yet consider it as something altogether accidental, unessential, or even injurious to religion; whereas Catholics believe that this pre-eminence was expressly established by our Saviour, the founder of the church, and that this unity is inherent in the essence of Christianity. As to the extent of the rights to which the chief bishop is entitled, differences of opinion have undoubtedly prevailed among the learned on the Catholic side. It may be difficult, indeed impossible, strictly to define beforehand in all cases the limits of this influence, and how far it should extend. This is the more the case, as one and the same question, under different circumstances and at different times, may take a totally different form, and become something totally different. Those who really and sincerely desire unity, will hardly ever come to a serious dispute upon that point—will never be in doubt as to where the centre of unity is to be found. But those who are bent upon discord, or violent encroachments, will at all times, among the countless multitude of earlier cases and examples that present themselves, easily find some plausible ground of right—some fact that testifies in their favour, although from difference of circumstances there may be no real analogy, and make this a cloak and apology for their designs. Troubles of this character the church and Christianity have experienced at almost all times more or less; but often as they may have had the appearance of success, not one of them has ever effected the overthrow of that church.

It is far from surprising that Charlemagne should have enriched the Roman see with large endowments, laying thereby the foundation for the subsequent states of the church. Many reasons may be assigned for such a measure. Even in very early times, under the heathen emperors themselves, the Roman bishops possessed great wealth, even in lands. This wealth

was not intended for personal expenditure ; but, besides other ecclesiastical wants, was destined especially for the education and support of a large number of ecclesiastics, as well as for the expenses of their journeys either to propagate Christianity, or to keep up the living communion of the church. In later times the Roman bishop possessed especially large demesnes in Naples and Sicily. When he was deprived of these by the Saracens and the Greeks, what was more natural, than that the Frankish conquerors should supply the loss to him, by other districts? It was moreover a universal custom to make, especially in the remoter parts of the empire, such voluntary endowments an instrument of security. The especial circumstance is also to be added, that the power of the Roman bishop, with whom the Lombards had long been at enmity, could contribute much to secure their new Italian conquests to the Franks. These are the political reasons which may be adduced for those endowments ; subsequently, another consideration came to be added. It was not until liberated by Charlemagne from the oppression of the Lombards and the Greeks, that the Roman see could again enforce its ancient claims, and rise with new dignity. Very willingly did Charlemagne co-operate in restoring the ecclesiastical and spiritual authority of the chief bishop to its full efficiency, as this appeared to him the fairest and most fitting means for reforming the church, and for reintroducing, as far as circumstances would allow, the severity of ancient discipline. A reformation was of the more pressing urgency, as it may have happened that several bishops, from the increase of wealth and political influence, grew lax in their spiritual functions. Other emperors also, such as Henry the Third, contributed much to bring into activity the power of the Roman bishop as supreme head of the church. In earlier times, it was precisely the most powerful, emperors who conceded most to the ecclesiastical authority. That not only the state, but also the church, might be governed with a symmetrical constitution, and with strict regularity, it seemed to them necessary, together with the aristocratic element of the ecclesiastical body, the episcopal power, to uphold also the monarchical authority of the universal and supreme head, and to render it efficacious. In proportion as the relations between church and state were unfolded, the different powers within the church were more developed.



Especially important was the circumstance, that the Roman bishop had so often to act as umpire in the most important affairs of Europe, particularly from the time of Charlemagne. As it had been the custom among Christians, even from the earliest times, to refer any disputes that might arise among themselves to the decision of their bishop, as a voluntary chosen umpire, it need not surprise us that now, when the bishops had become an order and a power in the state, the mighty ones—the kings and princes of Christendom—should have so often appealed to the first of all bishops as judge or their differences; for by the princes themselves was the head of the church first called upon to decide certain weighty matters of state, and generally to exert influence over the affairs of Europe. For this influence it is not necessary to seek especial grounds; there was a general foundation laid for it in the partition of western Europe into several states, and by the division of the empire among the Carolingians was this power of the pope decidedly increased. Whatever opinion we may form of the abuse, which some popes may have made of this influence in the affairs of Europe, which however was wholly distinct from the essence of their spiritual supremacy, yet we cannot deny, on examining closely the wants, the situation, and the spirit of those times, that it accomplished much good; that not seldom it protected the oppressed cause of justice; that often it was only the decided opinion of the people, the visibly predominant opinion of all good men, which by the interference of the spiritual power became articulate, and acquired weight and often even preponderance. It seemed desirable and wholesome that even against the mightiest rulers one voice dared still be raised aloud for justice—a voice of which he should stand in awe, which he could not silence by mere force. The Papal power, like the Imperial, was a popular one; the pope was the organ and umpire of the European republic, which was already felt to be a want, although it was not yet clearly set up as a distinct ideal. This contributed much to the peculiar character of European civilization; for, by this very influence of the popes, the European nations were placed in close communion, yet without losing their independence. Here, in fact, was first manifested that ideal which is the foundation of the European system of states and nations—an ideal of a rightful

union, of a free confederacy—which should embrace all nations and states of the civilized world, without sacrificing the unity, the free and peculiar national development of any individual people. We readily admit that this ideal was as little brought to full perfection in those ages as is ours in modern times. The relations between the church and the empire in the middle age were indeed never altogether in harmony, nor was that, which the great and good on both sides aimed at, ever completely realized. Still less can it be our intention to justify all the individual acts of the popes and emperors; but, even of those that seem most blameworthy, we can rightly judge only, when we have conceived the idea which was at the bottom of all the political efforts of those days, and have placed ourselves in the midst of them. Rightly to trace this spirit of the earlier times, and to bring it vividly before our eyes, is my great object; and if it is neither possible nor even advisable to suppress my own convictions in drawing a picture of this kind, yet I hope never to fail in the strictest justice towards those of opposite opinions. This justice is better taught by history than by anything else; for history regards the great differences which divide the human race, not as subjects of dispute, but as events in the world, as the development and facts of the human mind; the judgment becomes infinitely milder when it is habitually directed to great objects.

Rarely has a state risen in so brief a space of time, and from such limited power, and so perilous a situation, to such a preponderance of strength, as Germany did during the period from Conrad the First to Henry the Fourth, from the beginning of the tenth to the middle of the eleventh century. But in this series of emperors, several can be named, such as Henry the First, Otho the Great, Conrad the Salian, and Henry the Third, who would have shone by the side of the most renowned conquerors of antiquity, had their aim been merely the aggrandizement of power. But as they rather sought the higher honour of governing and legislating according to law and custom, and of upholding order in Christendom, as well as the ancient freedom of their fatherland, they were satisfied with moderately extending and strengthening their kingdom. Conrad was the first king elected by the five assembled German nations; he, however, had not sufficient strength from his hereditary demesne to

enable him to uphold the full dignity and consideration of the Germanic crown.' On his death-bed he magnanimously recommended the princes, passing by his own house, to elect the most powerful of the German princes, Henry the Saxon. The old Germanic constitution as an elective kingdom has been censured, and all the evils have been cited usually attendant upon that form of government. Now every institution is good or evil according to the temper of the people and the character of the times; and in a country, in which such sentiments prevail as were evinced by Conrad the Franconian in that magnanimous action, an elective monarchy may well exist. This whole succession of energetic and great kings and emperors is the best justification of the elective form, based on the old Germanic constitution. It occurred, moreover, precisely at the time when the constitution began to pass from the elective to the hereditary form; for men were induced by the authority of a great emperor not to go out of his house, and the son was elected even in the lifetime of the father. In this case, if a minority and a regency intervened, the empire would appear in a weaker and more uncertain condition. At the commencement of the tenth century, a powerful, energetic, and valiant warrior was required as king of the Germans, for Germany was on almost all sides surrounded by enemies. In the west was a dispute with France in respect to Lorraine, Lothaire's kingdom, part of that northern central region in which the Netherlands were included; on the north and east the whole frontier was engirdled by heathen and hostile peoples, the Danes and the various Slavonic races. The Hungarians principally struck terror into all Europe. Their inroads into northern Italy, and into Germany as far as the Rhine, were the more devastating, as they were bent, not on conquest, and on settling in the conquered territories, but merely on amassing booty, and then returning home. In a short space of time, even during the two reigns of Henry the First and Otho the Great, not only was Lorraine secured, the Danes overcome, the north-eastern frontier towards the Slavonic tribes gradually advanced, the incursions of the Hungarians put an end to by the battle of Merseburg, and that on the Lech, but even Italy and the imperial dignity were annexed to the kingdom. Germany was already, without

comparison, the most powerful state in Europe, even before Conrad the Second, by treaty with its last heirless king, had incorporated the kingdom of Burgundy, the whole southern part of the central region, including Savoy, Dauphiné, and Provence, into his German kingdom. The whole extent, however, of the power and influence of the emperors was by no means confined within these vast territories, stretching as they did from the Mediterranean to the Northern and Baltic seas. On the introduction of Christianity into Denmark, Bohemia, Poland, and Hungary, this influence became very perceptible. The power of the German kings over these countries was sometimes greater, sometimes less; and incorrect as any definition of it, according to the principles of modern Salic law would be, yet the relations with the last-named lands will enable us to form an adequate conception of the authority in which the Germanic kingdom and the emperor stood. The relations with Hungary were the most remarkable and various. After the introduction of Christianity, the greatest progress was there visible in every branch of civilization; for in King Stephen, who, as a wise sovereign and lawgiver, held the like relation to his people that Alfred had done to his, Hungary possessed one of those rare men, who rise far above their age, and who, for centuries, long influence and guide the progress of civilization. In this epoch, likewise, occurs the restoration of Austria as a Germanic province. The eastern provinces of the Danube, inhabited at the era of the great northern migrations by Christian and Gothic tribes, the Herulians, Rugians, and Lombards, were subsequently conquered by non-German and heathen nations, without the German race, however, being exterminated. The Franks strove to extend the empire even further in this direction; and by Charlemagne's conquests, which were pushed as far as the Raab, Austria was again completely freed. Under the last weak Carlovingians, these eastern marches were once more lost; and from that time it became impossible to offer the least resistance to the invasions of the Hungarians. The Austrian Margraviate, however, restored by the Othos, flourished once more, under the Babenberger family, and soon surpassed the other German provinces in blooming prosperity, trade, and culture.

After Germany had become an independent elective king-

dom, each of the four principal German nations, the Franks, the Saxons, the Suabians, and the Bavarians, with the exception of the latter, gave a dynasty to the state. Although the kingdom was an elective one, yet birth in the reigning house was an almost legally established claim for the succession; primogeniture, however, did not prevail; but a free election took place from among the several members of the reigning family. Even the succession of the eldest, if it was left with him, required the solemn confirmation of an election; and on the extinction of a dynasty, the absolute right of election reverted in full force. Each of the three dynasties of the German kings and emperors, the Franconian, the Saxon, and the Suabian, lasted somewhat longer than a hundred years. They all resemble each other in this, that the great military heroes and energetic sovereigns of each dynasty appear chiefly among the earlier kings and emperors; the later members, on the other hand, manifest a greater predisposition to refinement, and less energy, or at least an energy less severely disciplined, and less wisely applied, more irregular, more ungovernable. Thus Henry the First and Otho the Great were the heroes of the Saxon royal line; the two last Othos were distinguished for their family connection with the Greek imperial house, and by their predilection for southern magnificence and refinement. They even copied the ceremonial of the Byzantine court, and they may have conceived the idea possible of reestablishing the seat of empire at Rome. The first emperors of the Franconian dynasty, Conrad the Salian, and Henry the Third, were perhaps the most powerful and fortunate emperors that Germany ever had. The weakness and the ungovernable character of their successors contributed much to distract the empire by the great contest with the church, although the motives for such a contest had already long existed, and the struggle itself was inevitable. Among the sovereigns of the Suabian dynasty, Frederick the First, a stern ruler, and a formidable, if not always successful, warrior, shows how great and powerful an emperor even at that time was and might be. Frederick the Second, though perhaps superior in refinement and boldness of intellect to all preceding emperors, indeed to all the sovereigns of the middle age, yet, by the profligate employment he made of his great

gifts, brought about the destruction of the German kingdom and empire, such as it had existed in the middle age under the three above-named dynasties. Rodolph of Hapsburg, and after him Maximilian, restored it, indeed, but the former under a very different form. Thus in all three dynasties was exhibited a like progressive of declining movement from energy to weakness, from a severe and regular system of government to a state of license and anarchy.

All these dynasties, alike placed their highest glory in possessing the imperial dignity, and in elevating it to a pinnacle of splendour. Frederick the Second was the first, who seems to have undervalued a dignity hitherto esteemed the highest of all earthly dignities. We may add, that in the system of policy of the three dynasties, there was a material difference in the direction of their conquests. The Saxon emperors bent their energies against the hostile nations on the north and east, and laid thereby the foundations for the strength and greatness of the empire. In Italy they sought fame rather than sovereign possessions; in Germany itself they ruled with magnanimity and mildness. The Franconian emperors evidently aimed at unlimited power. Not that they sought to put down the freedom of the people, to wrest their rights from the lesser nobility, or to discourage the rise of the cities; but undoubtedly they had the evident intention of rendering the empire absolutely hereditary, of abolishing the peculiar rights of the different German states, of extending in every way the regal power, and perhaps even they cherished the remoter plan of incorporating the great duchies with the crown. Their system of policy, thus directed to the aggrandizement of power, as soon as it was unwisely applied, laid the foundation for that contest with the church, in which they were first involved. This contest concerned the respective claims of the emperor and the Roman see upon the ecclesiastical princes, whose dependence on their temporal superior these emperors exacted with as much strictness and jealousy as they showed in the exercise of any other of their royal rights. They appear, moreover, to have sought to obtain especial influence over the church itself. No emperor before or after him possessed so much of this sort of influence as Henry the Third; and although he made a good use of it, yet it was

naturally calculated to bring about a reaction. The Suabian emperors finally neglected, not only the earlier acquisitions and claims in the countries both north, west, and east of the empire, but even Germany itself and their imperial mission, in order to become the absolute rulers and monarchs of the beautiful Hesperian peninsula. In their time the contest between the church and the empire assumed a totally different character, as the temporal interests of the independence or the subjection of Italy became involved in it. With regard to the acquisitions by conquest, those of the Saxon emperors were the most important, the most necessary for the preservation of the state, and the most advantageous for the growth of its true power. It has been doubted whether the incorporation of the kingdom of Burgundy with that of Germany made any important addition to the true power of the latter, since this sovereignty in Burgundy was not of sufficient duration for the two countries to become thoroughly united, and it is easy to see how loosely even Lorraine hung to the empire. At least, however, the western frontiers were secured by this acquisition, for even at that time France could easily have become a most dangerous rival and neighbour to Germany.

In like manner, modern historians are almost unanimously of opinion that the connection with Italy, and even the imperial dignity, was injurious to Germany. It may indeed be admitted that the German kings, in the succeeding times, would have been more powerful, if the state had extended its conquests in other directions, or if the kings had applied their energies to the acquisition of unlimited power. But to civilization this connection was undoubtedly advantageous. Italy might likewise have been secured, if the earliest emperors had resided in it more, especially in the northern provinces, and had incorporated these more closely with Germany. Under the Suabian emperors this was too late; and by the acquisition of Sicily, not only the house of Suabia, but the imperial authority itself, wholly forfeited the affections of the Italians, who then apprehended utter subjugation.

Despite all these limitations, the power of the empire under the more vigorous emperors was very great. It included all Germany, together with Switzerland and Holland, northern Italy, and the eastern provinces of France. It

exerted an often very palpable influence on Denmark, Poland, and Hungary; and possessed an altogether incalculable power and grandeur in the opinion and belief of all European nations.

Before I proceed to give a picture of Europe in general at the period of the crusades, the internal condition and the internal constitution of Germany demand our attentive consideration. This is the more requisite, as, in the historical representations of that time, the German king is generally forgotten in the Roman emperor, or at least not sufficiently noticed. This remarkable constitution undoubtedly deserves a most careful examination, censured although it be by modern writers, to whom this variety and free co-operation of powers, as manifested in the institutions of the several estates, and their mutual relations, appears too complex, and as a mere state of anarchy. These historians desire but one thing in a state, have that alone before their eyes in writing its history, namely, the progressive increase and consolidation of unlimited power and sovereignty.

Five nations assembled at the election of the first German king—the Franks, Saxons, Suabians, Bavarians, and Thuringians; of these, the Franks chiefly occupied the middle provinces of the Rhine, together with the greater part of Hesse, and the districts on the Main. These Frankish provinces of the Rhine, as they were the principal abode of Charlemagne, and especially favoured by him, had speedily excelled all the other German lands in refinement. Saxony, however, which at that time constituted all northern Germany, quickly rivalled Franconia in this respect. This arose from the influence of the emperors of the Saxon race, from the authority which the nation and the country thereby acquired, and from the effect produced by their habitual residence in the country. The duke of Saxony was more powerful than the duke of Franconia, partly because his territories were more extensive, and partly because there the ducal power was not so much circumscribed by great bishops as it was in the Rhenish provinces. Suabia, including Alsace and Switzerland, retained the most traces of the primitive Germanic constitution, and that alone would entitle it to the most attentive consideration. The old Germanic class of freemen, which had almost everywhere else become



extinct through the ever-growing ascendancy of the feudal system, was longer preserved in its primitive equality, partially at least, and as an isolated remnant of antiquity, on the Suabian soil, and more perfectly still in the Swiss mountains, than in any other province of Germany. In Rhenish Franconia, the new constitution, such as it had been newly moulded and developed in the great Carolingian empire, and its chief province, naturally predominated. In Saxony, doubtless, many of the ancient institutions fell to the ground at the conquest by which it was annexed to the empire. In the Saxon provinces, moreover, the incorporation of so many Slavonic localities and tribes was undoubtedly injurious to the old free Germanic constitution.

The Germans of this period have been reproached with oppressing and harshly treating the Slavonians; and indeed with regard to the wars, waged as they were with obstinacy and animosity, the reproach may be well founded. As to the effects, however, of those wars on subsequent times, we may triumphantly refer to the flourishing prosperity of so many provinces in north Germany, which were originally Slavonic, but had become wholly or partially Germanized by German conquerors and colonists, as contrasted with other provinces which had retained throughout the old Slavonian constitution. Among the Slavonians the separation between nobles and non-nobles was originally far stricter, the relations of the former to the latter infinitely more oppressive. There is no trace of the original existence of a class of freemen among the Slavonians as among the Germans. Of the internal strength, prosperity, and populousness of Germany at that time, these wide-spread German settlements in countries that were before Slavonian, such as Brandenburg, Meissen, and Silesia, are calculated to give us a high idea. Mere conquest, without subsequent colonization, could never have accomplished so much. To this must be added the vast armies that left Germany for Italy and for the crusades. The incorporation of Slavonian provinces and tribes, however, had incontestably an injurious influence on the Germanic constitution. From two sides influences hostile to the ancient freedom now acted on Germany. On the one side, the new Frankish feudal spirit, before which the order of freemen gradually disappeared; on the other, the harsh

oppression of the non-noble, unfree class which the Slavonians introduced. On the other hand, in the place of the ancient order of freemen, the new order of burgesses arose in consequence of the increasing number and population of the cities ; it increased in power and rights, till at last it became a third member of the constitution, and thus completed the structure of the body politic. The emperors fostered and in every way furthered the rise of this third estate. This policy was not only required by their interest, in order to establish a counterpoise to the excessive power of the princes, but resulted from the very nature of their dignity. The power of the German emperor and king was a popular power, and reposed entirely upon the force of public opinion, upon faith in the loftiness of the Imperial office, upon veneration for its sanctity. Hence was an emperor of strong mind, even without large family demesnes, almost all-powerful. Otho the Great could even grant away his duchy on becoming emperor, without detriment to his might as sovereign ; and, in after-times, the power of Frederick the First was beyond all proportion to the extent of his hereditary demesnes. Utterly impotent, however, was the German imperial and royal dignity, if the bearer of it were personally incapable of upholding it. Much of the old Germanic freedom existed in the then constitution, although in a totally different and new form. Each of the five above-named nations constituted a duchy. Saxony and Franconia existed as such even at the establishment of the German kingdom ; Suabia and Bavaria were added soon after ; Thuringia, a remnant only of the former rather considerable Gothic kingdom of the same name, which was overthrown by the Franks, was proportionately not so strong ; Lorraine, which was afterwards added as a sixth duchy and nation, by reason of its fluctuating relations with France, as well as its remoteness, did not acquire such active influence as the other principal nations and members of the Germanic kingdom, such as the Franks, Saxons, Suabians, and Bavarians. Some jealousy, it must be admitted, arose, especially between the Saxons and Franks, as also between the different German nations, whose diversity of character even yet, after so long and intimate a union, has not altogether disappeared. But were freedom well possible without some jealousy ? Many of the feuds of this time, it is clearly evident, were carried on,

as were often the wars in the middle age, more like chivalrous single combats than with the rancour of civil or national wars. Such rancour was rarely exhibited in the earlier period ; but, from the reign of the unhappy Henry the Fourth, it broke out more and more in the contests of the Guelphs and Ghibellines.

The dukes were no longer elected by the people, as in the primitive times, but were nominated or confirmed by the king as Lord Paramount. The dukedom, notwithstanding, was a peculiar national dignity, instituted for the defence and protection of the rights and liberties of the individual nation ; in like manner as to the king was committed the care of the entire realm. Easy as it was for the powerful German kings to institute or depose the dukes, often as they gave away these dignities to their nearest relatives, yet we may perceive that even the most powerful emperors, even those who aimed at absolute sovereignty, shrunk from formally annexing a lapsed dukedom to the crown. Hence we may infer that the independence of the duchies was considered a principle of the constitution. One of the many advantages of the elective system was, that no partition of the empire, which else might have been scarcely avoidable, could take place. The essential distinctions between the then existing constitution and the more ancient one may be thus summed up. The nobility had become much more powerful and dominant, but the duke and the king protected each his own people ; the latter, as well as the bishops, favoured the towns in particular, in which a new third estate was rising up, and soon also a new civilization began to flourish. All the elements, indeed, of a happy constitution existed in the kingdom ; but if these elements were not altogether harmonized—if these germs of a good constitution were never fully matured—the cause is to be sought for in those vehement commotions, which shortly afterwards convulsed all Europe, and swept the nations irresistibly along in their course. The towns and their flourishing prosperity furnish a fresh proof of the vast internal strength of Germany at this period. No individual city, indeed, attained to the grandeur of some of the Italian cities, (and this, in the proximity of the royal throne, was scarcely possible) ; but in the vast number of her cities, that were yet very populous, flourishing, and wealthy, Germany surpassed even Italy herself. The autho-

rity of the dukes was undoubtedly an obstacle to the attainment of absolute sovereignty on the part of the kings. Hence it is very probable that the latter readily sought to augment the power of the bishops, and raised them to the rank of real ecclesiastical princes, in order to balance the excessive power of the temporal princes. As early as at the election of Conrad the Second, we find, beside the chief nations, mention made of the principal bishops, particularly of the three Rhenish archbishops, as voting at the election.

But it was precisely from this quarter that a violent tempest now menaced Germany. It was the political power of the bishops, who had been raised to the dignity of princes, and their double relation to the church and to the state, so difficult to be reconciled, that occasioned the contest between the imperial throne and the Roman see, that endured for a century and a half, that involved Italy and Germany in the countless feuds of the Guelphs and Ghibellines, and that finally terminated by depriving the imperial dignity of its strength and ancient authority (till it was restored by Rodolph's energetic love of justice), and by rendering the head of the church outwardly a dependant on a foreign state. The contest from the very beginning was the fiercer, from its occurring in the reign of Henry the Fourth, an emperor of a character as violent and passionate, as it was weak. His long reign was so utterly unsystematic and confused in policy, that it appears more like a prolonged minority, and often even like an interregnum. On the other side stood a man, Gregory the Seventh, to whom, even his enemies confess, both for energy and strength of character, few can be found equal in history. The dispute related more immediately to the twofold dependence of the bishops upon the church and the state, and was in a certain sense irreconcilable, as neither the king could or would surrender his feudal rights to ecclesiastical princes as such, nor the church on her part renounce the desire, that the bishops should above all, and before all, be churchmen. This was the real subject of dispute, and not merely this or that outward formality. Hence when peace was finally established, the terms of it were such as are usual in irreconcilable disputes; neither party attains entirely its object, and an indecisive middle state is formally adopted, and is accepted as a real decision. However neces-

sary and advantageous to the state the power of the clergy as an order, and their participation in the legislative and deliberative assemblies of the empire might be,—little incompatible, too, as was this relation with their spiritual mission, yet the case was very different as to their feudal relations, at least such as these were conceived at that period. Even in earlier times bishops had been drawn into the field, and had grasped the sword instead of the pastoral staff, because they had acquired and possessed lands, to which military service was attached as a feudal duty. Laws had been enacted against this abuse, as early as the times of the Frankish and Carolingian kings. Now that, partly from pious zeal, partly from political motives, so much landed property was placed in the hands of the clergy, great nobles and princes, whose position gave them influence in the nomination to an ecclesiastical dignity, and especially the kings, sought to indemnify themselves by secretly or even publicly selling these offices and dignities. This was not only a scandal, contrary to the express laws of the church, recognised by the state itself, but we may well believe it to have much contributed to weaken and relax all legal and moral ties. This abuse it was, which Gregory the Seventh sought chiefly to put an end to. In the time of the powerful emperor Henry the Third, and supported by him, the German popes, who were Gregory's immediate successors, and acted under his influence, had already commenced the reform of that unworthy system of selling episcopal dignities. Gregory sought to strike at the root of the evil. It cannot perhaps be denied, that he entertained the design of rendering the church wholly free and independent of the temporal power, which, especially in the times immediately preceding him, had certainly exercised a very injurious influence upon ecclesiastical discipline. If Gregory the Seventh interfered in German affairs, he was called upon and appealed to by the princes and nations themselves, just as centuries before in the Carolingian times, in similar cases, the chief bishop was considered the natural umpire in cases of dispute. If we judge of this occurrence according to the manners, the dominant ideas, and the public law of that era, and not of our own, any surprise we may at first feel will then disappear. This extraordinary man has had the fate of all

great reformers, to be either passionately applauded or passionately censured. That he was a man of heroic strength and will, and of the most comprehensive understanding, is now admitted even by those who utterly condemn his principles. They confess also that he was a true reformer of the church, at least as regards morality, and of the constitution according to the undoubted laws and principles of the time; and further, that his own morals were severe and irreproachable. Of unbounded ambition alone is he accused. If he were not even wholly free from this, yet his was no petty love of dominion, but that noble ambition, without which no distinguished man, filled with a great idea, will be found, whenever he finds himself in a position to carry out and realize the great all-powerful idea, that has penetrated his inmost soul, and at the sacrifice of every external advantage, to work by his mind powerfully upon his contemporaries and upon all posterity. Gregory undoubtedly regarded himself as the appointed champion of the independence and reformation of the church. He foresaw that the general hatred and persecution, not only of the princes, but even of a great part of the clergy, might be his only reward; and several express intimations to this effect are found in his confidential letters. Many historians have even remarked that he would scarcely have escaped a violent end, if he had not died at the right moment a natural death.

How little a merely selfish state-policy lay at the bottom of this unhappy contest between the head of the church and the emperor, is strikingly exemplified by the proposal of a later pope. He proposed, namely, that if the emperor insisted inexorably on the feudal dependence of bishops and ecclesiastics, he should rather take back their lands and retain them for himself. If the emperors could or would have agreed to this offer, their power might have been easily doubled or trebled, and it would have been the readiest means of restoring peace. That the proposal was not meant in earnest, I cannot convince myself, because under certain conditions it might have been practicable, and the pope as well as the emperor, if they had been reconciled on those terms, would have each been the gainer thereby. The dispute for priority between the two powers was on the whole irreconcilable, since both parties were in the right. Popes had

often been chosen by the influence of the emperors, and often had the popes adjudged and decided on whom the imperial dignity was to devolve ; yet neither had ever been recognised by the respective parties as a right of the other. The right of a formal recognition, and the confirmation it involved, of the emperors by the popes, and of the popes by the emperors, was confirmed by so many precedents, that it was not a matter of doubt. No injurious consequences would follow from it as long as concord existed between the two powers. Whenever an emperor refused to recognise a pope, or a pope an emperor, such refusal occurred in cases only in which the nature of the matter itself, the notorious invalidity of the election, and the voice of the nation and the church, had already pronounced a decision. But now that the unhappy dispute had once commenced, who was to heal it, who to decide, who should be judge between the holy father, the head of the church, the mouthpiece and the umpire of the European republic, and the emperor, who as the first of all kings, as the recognised lord paramount of many of them, as the protector of all Christendom, and the universal defender of justice and freedom, personified the highest earthly authority ? The contest could scarcely have had any other issue than what it actually had ; both parties were forced to retire within narrower limits. The pope remained little more than spiritual head of the church ; the emperor merely the first and greatest king. Both lost by the contest the greater part of that influence in the European republic, which had been so beneficial to the common weal, and to the cause of civilization, and which might have become much more so in the sequel. Thus, neither Rome nor the empire were any longer the central point of Europe, as it was their mission to be ; nor did they retain even that degree of influence which for a time they had possessed. It was now, when a fully organized confederacy of states could no longer be established among the Christian nations of Europe, that a third institution arose and was developed, which served as a new and very beneficial link to bind them together, at least by common principles, customs, and sentiments of honour, affection, and refinement.

With the Papacy and the imperial dignity, chivalry constituted the third power of the middle age, and that power was

not merely national, but universal and European. The germ of it lay even in the primitive Germanic constitution; its development was especially promoted by the crusades. To form a vivid idea of the mode of life in the middle age, we must above all enter into the spirit of chivalry. But even in the history of the political constitution it creates an epoch, as a new and very remarkable form of nobility; for as the nobility is the first of the fundamental powers of the state, each new form it may assume involves a change in the constitution, a new epoch in its development. After the old Germanic martial and popular nobility had passed into a feudal and ministerial aristocracy, this new form of nobility, chivalry, imparted to this institution a far higher, nobler, and holier stamp and significance, which will indeed always remain one of the most pleasing phenomena in the history of the world.

The development of chivalry and the history of the crusades were much influenced by the romantic spirit of the Normans. Their history connects the two great European events of the middle age: the first northern migrations, and the crusades. On the coasts of France, where they conquered that loveliest and most fertile province of the whole country, which still bears their name, and then in England, Italy, and Sicily, and finally in Asia, they were the last northern emigrants, who settled by force of arms in southern regions. Their conquest of England was accompanied by an immigration of the conquering nation; and hence was the cause of universal change in its language, manners, and constitution, and the origin of the long connection and the long warfare that subsisted between England and France in the middle age. Together with Christianity, the first Norman conquerors in France soon adopted the new Romanic, or as it might already be called, French language; but in mind, and manners they retained their individuality throughout the whole of the middle age, so that at that time Normans and French, even when speaking the same language, must be by no means regarded as one, but as two very distinct nations. The Normans were chiefly characterized by the romantic enthusiasm of mind, which displays itself even in the character of their conquests. Their love of poetry and their romantic turn of mind they may have brought with them from their old northern homes. This spirit they certainly did not first



acquire in France; rather through them did the genius of chivalry become prevalent, in France in particular, as well as in Europe in general. Bold mariners as they first appeared, they ever retained that love of adventure, which spurred them on to distant enterprises and conquests, which, to the eye of cool calculation, might perhaps have appeared impracticable. They thus succeeded in establishing themselves in the southern and most lovely regions of Italy, in Naples and Sicily, where they were at first favoured by the emperors as a military class of landowners, capable of offering resistance to the Greeks and Saracens. They afterwards became the feudatories of the pope. Dependency on the latter was not so irksome to them as on a powerful emperor. To the Roman see they brought this advantage, that a large military state in Italy was henceforward devoted to it, and hostile to the preponderating influence of the emperors, until this Norman kingdom of Naples and Sicily devolved by marriage on the imperial house of Suabia. This event, by the threatening and now apparently imminent danger of the total subjugation of Italy, inflamed and exasperated still more the contests of the Guélphs and Ghibellines.

From their daring character and love of adventure, the Normans were especially adapted and called on to take part in the crusades. Thus their history connects the early northern migrations and the crusades, and forms the transition and link between them. The result of the crusades would have been more fortunate, if they had from the first assumed more the character of a migration, if the first conquests had been followed up by a permanent and suitably organized colonization. To form a correct judgment of this great enterprise, we must not forget that at that time, before the fanaticism of the Mahometans had been mitigated by a long intercourse with Europeans, one universal, uninterrupted state of warfare subsisted, and necessarily so, between Christian and Mahometan peoples and states. Had some European colonies been not only founded, but successfully maintained, in western Asia, this would have been the best bulwark for Europe against the East. It would then never have been possible for the Turks to establish an empire in Europe, to conquer or ravage so many flourishing Christian countries, especially Hungary and Austria, and to strike terror even

into Italy and Germany. But to introduce a European civilization once more into western Asia, as was before accomplished by the Greeks, it would have been necessary to secure other countries upon the coast, and not to direct attention, as happened at first, exclusively to Jerusalem. Above all, from the very beginning, the Greek empire, whose double policy was the chief cause of misfortune, should have been drawn into the system of European nations and states. When the Latin empire was afterwards established at Constantinople, this was already too late.

That it was a necessity for Europe, with its growing population, to disburden itself of a portion of it, is evident from the history of this whole period. Besides the causes above cited, to want of unity must it be attributed that such gigantic forces were ill applied, were for the most part wasted, and turned to mutual destruction. But if permanent European colonies did not flourish in Asia as in after-times in America, still both the beneficial and the injurious influence of the crusades upon the civilization, morals, and constitution of Europe was not less considerable than that which India and America have exercised in modern times, and which is still so perceptible.

## LECTURE VIII.

### ON THE CRUSADES.

IN the description of pilgrimages to the promised land, we remark that it was at first chiefly enthusiastic devotion that led the pious pilgrims to the Holy Sepulchre ; many afterwards engaged in these undertakings from a desire of encountering rare adventures, and for the sake of boasting of their achievements when they had happily returned home ; and others again, more worldly minded, began to traffic in the treasures they brought back from the East, and many individuals, tempted by these riches, were drawn into the enterprise. And thus also did it happen on the whole with those great armed pilgrimages, the Crusades, according to their different epochs, and according to the more distinguished characters that took part in them.

The first expedition under the pious Godfrey de Bouillon was wholly the work of enthusiasm and devotion ; hence its energies were the most irresistible, and it was crowned with success. In the succeeding periods, and especially in the heroic struggle between the lion-hearted Richard and the chivalrous Saladin, the original object was already more lost sight of ; and the romantic spirit evinced in the quest of martial glory and adventure became the moving spring of all nations.

Afterwards, when the Crusaders acted more systematically, when the Grecian empire was latinized, and it was perceived that to maintain Palestine in safety, Egypt must first be won ; when in St. Louis the flame of holy enthusiasm once more broke forth, then was that first genuine energy already extinguished, which alone was competent to accomplish enterprises so vast and so wholly new, whose success was so improbable according to the ordinary course of things, and even verged on the impossible. At last it was only the maritime powers of Italy, and especially the great commercial state of Venice, that preserved for any length of time a few of the possessions so painfully acquired, and obtained any considerable advantage. How often is such the course of human events ! A great idea, a powerful sentiment, seizes on the mind, and suddenly carries whole generations, as it does individual men, far beyond all the limits of custom, yea, over the greatest and apparently the most insurmountable obstacles. But when the object is attained, however, and when desire so quickly gratified grows cool in the possession of it ; when the object itself is forgotten in the efforts to attain it, then the excited mind will still delight in the feeling of its own activity, will sport with danger, and squander noble energies away till at last those powers prey upon themselves, and then a dexterous use of outward success, for the sake of immediate profit and gain, is gradually substituted,—an immediate profit, which so often deceives the calculator's hasty glance and terminates in loss.

Among the multitude of extraordinary characters and heroes that the history of this time presents, not one perhaps is so well adapted to display the full force of the chivalrous spirit then prevailing, and to show how even the king was forgotten in the knight, as the character of King Richard Cœur de Lion. His heroic deeds bordering on the marvellous, his perilous

return homewards, his imprisonment, and misfortunes, which yet could not tame his lion-like courage, interest our sympathies; although, as we may easily suppose, a life so chivalrous and stormy was but ill adapted to a careful and systematic government of his kingdom. Characters like this, or even like Godfrey's, and other chivalrous heroes of the Crusades, inspired by devotion, are fitter to be grasped by a Tasso's fancy, and to be set forth to contemporaries and to posterity in fascinating pictures, than to be unveiled and analyzed by the critical eye of a Tacitus. The characters and heroes of the middle age are mainly distinguished from those of antiquity by their whole life, and all their actions, being guided and ruled by the imagination, or by some great idea, rather than by any systematic plan of the understanding. Alexander the Great alone is in this respect an exception from the other celebrated Greeks and Romans, and bears a greater resemblance, as do likewise most Oriental heroes, to those of the middle age, inasmuch as fancy and enthusiasm predominate in them rather than a calculating understanding. Hence at that period, in all struggles, perils, and tumults, that fulness of life which breathes from and overflows everything—that magical glow of fancy that embellishes even sufferings.

As in the old northern saga, the beatified heroes of the Walhalla delighted in combats during the day; but, when at evening the sun began to sink, were healed of their stricken wounds by magic power, became reconciled to each other, and sat together in friendly union at the festal banquet; so, also, the chivalrous combats of that romantic period had often no outward result of any political importance; and an heroic life, spent amidst all the adventures of Europe and the East, often left nothing at its close but a sense of repose, as in the evening of a hot day a feeling of touching reminiscences and of gentle reconciliation in still and holy retirement. In inward feeling, however, such an heroic life was undoubtedly richer than the matter-of-fact life of those men of the understanding, who, in the history of states, often merely by the position they occupy, and in despite of their moral inanity, strongly influence the vast machinery of human affairs, and contribute more to its continued working than they themselves know or feel.

The spirit of chivalry, however, formed only one epoch, one side of the middle age; and if on the whole, in characters and

in manners, the predominant sway of fancy, the omnipotence of certain great ideas, is very striking, yet it would be unjust to deny its great lawgivers to this period. Alfred, king of England; Stephen, king of Hungary, the great civilizer of his people; and St. Louis of France, would be alone sufficient to refute such an opinion. Of the German kings and emperors we should have to name many, if we would distinguish all, who were not merely valiant warriors, but reflecting generals, whose glance surveyed the whole field of action—who were not merely monarchs of powerful will, but the ruling spirits of their age—who well knew and weighed the internal strength of states. The most celebrated Germans were especially distinguished by a severe, earnest, and heroic energy; of this energy and loftiness of character in the middle age, the contest between the emperor Frederick the First and Henry the Lion affords a fine example and picture. Although that powerful emperor, who had a true reverence for justice, but was severe even to cruelty in exacting his rights, was so enraged with Henry, his old friend, deserting him in his arduous Italian wars, that he could not rest till, in his tempestuous might, he had overthrown that great hero, after himself the most potent prince of the age, and had shattered and destroyed his power; yet, when he saw him at his feet, he was nevertheless overcome with the deepest emotion on account of his old friend and brother in arms. It was precisely heroic feelings like these, which at that time, and especially among the Germans, held greater sway than the cold calculations of the understanding. The Italian characters of the middle age, on the other hand, in their early republican cast, and in their predilection for a stern and often cruel policy, bear a greater resemblance to the heroes of antiquity. The genuine spirit of chivalry was in no European nation at that time so exclusively predominant as among the Normans. The same spirit and manners, too, were in that Norman period common to France and England, as those two states were in so many ways connected and united by Normandy.

The want of unity, which was the principal cause of the failure of the Crusades, is not to be referred to the divergent plans and enterprises of individual leaders only. But the great dissimilarity in mind and character,—in the external position, and in the separate interests of particular nations,

was also an obstacle to concord. The Spaniards were too much engaged at home in their contest with the Arabs to take any very great share in the Crusades ; and, on account of their remoteness, the same may be said of the nations in the extreme north. Northern Italy and Germany, the imperial state, were so utterly absorbed and agitated by the great schism between the church and the empire, so entirely engaged in all their provinces and states, great and small, by the feud between the Guelphs and Ghibellines, that although they took part in the Crusades with great energy indeed, when once they had commenced so to do, yet it was only after long delays, and almost unwillingly. Never at least, did they follow so readily the general stream and current of the time, as the Norman nation in England, in the Norman provinces of France, and in Naples, or as the French, who were animated with the like spirit. All these kindred nations were powerful by their numerous population and martial courage, were then concerned about no other great object, and were therefore more susceptible of enthusiasm for this enterprise. They were, perhaps, even sufficiently strong to have accomplished the undertaking alone ; and it would then the more easily have obtained full success, and been attended with lasting results.

The great German Crusades under the emperors Conrad the Third and Frederick the First were, from the effects of climate and the treachery of the Greeks, the most unfortunate of all. Frederick the Second was content and even happy enough to have only brought about a peace, though certainly a very advantageous one, and hastened home to his favourite Sicily. The head of the church, and the maritime states of Italy, had indeed alone any fixed plan in the conduct of these expeditions, and any true interest in their permanent success, though both of course with very different views. Hence, it is not to be wondered at, that they were unable always to direct suitably and in just combination the irregular armies, composed of so many diverse nations of the confederated Christians ; and, on the contrary, it must excite our astonishment, that the European dominion in Asia lasted even so long as it did.

Among the effects of the Crusades, the most striking was the awakening and the giving a higher life to the spirit of

chivalry. The principles of honour, it is true, the exercise of arms, and the whole code of knightly maxims and manners, were long before brought into established forms, classed in gradations, and connected with certain outward ceremonies, and thereby the peculiar system of chivalry already instituted. This received its highest development, however, in the military orders, when the knight, devoted by a solemn vow to the great business of all Christendom, felt himself free from feudal dependence, and even exalted above the restraints of nationality, as the immediate warrior and vassal of God and of universal Christendom. The three great military orders, for which Europe is indebted to the East and to the Crusades, are the science and model of all other orders of knighthood. They are the knights of St. John, who even to the latest times have preserved the original spirit of chivalry in their persevering struggle with the Mahomedans; the Teutonic knights, who in Prussia founded the most powerful and flourishing German colony on the Baltic; and the order of Templars, which after a brief enjoyment of great power, was annihilated in so cruel a manner by the rapacity of the French king. In respect to any influence which the East may have exercised upon ideas in Europe, this last was indisputably the most remarkable of the three orders. In France, where also the first bloody religious war in Europe, that against the heretical Albigenses, had been carried on, and in precisely those districts in which, during the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, the Camisards, persecuted for their religion, were driven to despair, and finally exterminated after an obstinate struggle; in France also, occurred the cruel persecution of the order of the Templars, whose ruin, terminating in the execution of the last grand master, De Molay, so venerated for his virtues, neither the king, nor the pope, who had yielded to him, long survived. What the ideas were that prevailed in the order, what portion of their object was not publicly known, could not be brought to light in a proceeding like this, so unjust in its very form; at the most this, that there were secrets in the order, was shown, but not with any distinctness what those secrets were. The order was exterminated in France only; in other countries, although the sentence of dissolution pronounced by the pope was carried into effect, yet it was done with forbearance;

in some the Templars were incorporated with other newly established military orders, and to these their property was transferred. The spirit of the order was not extinguished; it lived and worked on in silence; and brief as was the period it filled a place in history, it may yet be numbered among the most remarkable phenomena of the world.

Next to the influence which the further development of chivalry exercised upon the constitution of Europe, the effect of the Crusades upon commerce, its extension, and direction, is one of the most visible and striking. As the latter tended to raise and increase the power of the cities and of the class of burghesses, so did it also tend to develop and vivify anew the arts. Yet was this influence limited to the powerful impulse imparted to the mind of Europeans by this extraordinary event, and to the increased wealth of the cities so favourable to the fine arts. The supposition, that in their earliest poetry and attempts at art, the European nations drew from eastern sources, and worked on eastern models, either disappears wholly on closer investigation, or at least is shown to have but a slight degree of truth. Their poetry first showed how much the fancy of the western nations was seized and excited by so many new objects beheld in the light of enthusiasm, and by so many bold adventurers accomplished. To this period belongs that chivalrous poetry, which flourished among the Normans and the Germans in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and which, in the beautiful diction and engaging narration of an Ariosto and a Tasso, has since become the property of all civilized Europe. Even in the Carolingian period the Germans had their heroic poems and love-songs, and the marvellous, so characteristic of the chivalrous poems, can the less have been borrowed from the East, as it already existed in the older northern sagas. It was only a fresh impulse that fancy received from the Crusades, the older heroic songs became gradually forgotten, or were adapted to the new taste. The chivalrous poetry was the faithful image of the chivalrous life and its unfailling companion, and precisely on that account is it for us the clearest mirror for reflecting the manners of those ages, and furnishes the best explanation of its history. The soaring spirit of the order of burghesses, which had grown great and powerful by commerce and the industrial arts, was exhibited on the other hand in the



proud structures, which wealthy cities were at that time emulous to erect, and which by their boldness excite to this day our admiration and astonishment.

The latter art was developed immediately after poetry, and it flourished in this age. The connection with the Greek capital which existed in the elder Carlovingian period, and more particularly in the times of the Saxon<sup>e</sup> emperors, led to an acquaintance with the Byzantine architecture, and an imitation of it. Of this Byzantine architecture Germany, as well as Italy, possesses some remarkable monuments. But now in Germany, and still more in the Low Countries and in England, in consequence of this new impulse of mind, there arose also a totally new order of architecture—the Gothic, as it is commonly called. Besides the above-named countries, Italy also can show in the cathedral of Milan, erected by German artists, a grand monument of this style, together with the colossal grandeur in the total impression. This Gothic architecture is characterized by an artistic fulness of detail; and precisely this characteristic it is, that renders it not only one of the most remarkable phenomena in the history of art, but at the same time a living monument of the middle age, and a mirror of the sentiments then prevailing. Entirely from the German mind has this peculiar Gothic, or rather old German style of architecture, sprung. The supposition, that it is of Arabic origin, is the more unfounded, as several buildings in Portugal and in Sicily, which are really designed in a semi-Moorish taste, display a style and character essentially different from the Gothic. This ecclesiastical architecture was next succeeded by painting, more immediately designed for the decoration of churches. The sight of the magnificent Greek churches, enriched with pictures, may have first given new life to this art, and therefore the oldest Italian and Flemish-German paintings bear a strong resemblance to the Byzantine. A new and peculiar style, however, was in both countries quickly developed in painting, and produced splendid master-pieces, worthy of eternal admiration.

Any really new acquisitions in learning and science, for which the Europeans were indebted to the Arabs, must be limited to a certain degree of knowledge in chemistry, medicine, and astronomy, and to an acquaintance with certain writings of Aristotle by the medium of a very corrupt and

almost unintelligible translation, which it can scarcely be maintained was any very great gain for the intellectual culture of the West. Those Mahomedans, moreover, who at this time occupied Palestine, and with whom the Christians came more immediately in contact, were a barbarous people. The flourishing times of the caliphāt had long, since passed away. The Arabs in Spain were more civilized, but the national and religious hatred between the Christians and them was too great, to allow them to have much influence on the intellectual cultivation of the Spaniards.

This whole epoch, in which Christians and Mahomedans came into multiplied relations with each other, in which East and West, after a long separation, again for the first time acted upon each other, naturally leads our attention to the man, whose spirit, for twelve centuries, has been the spirit of half Asia, and who has been its invisible ruler. Mahomet himself excites among the unprejudiced all that admiration, which heroic energy and enthusiasm must ever excite, when directed in strictest union towards a single object, when the character is withal single-minded, to all appearance substantially free from arts of deception and delusion, and his acts are founded upon steadfast conviction and immoveable faith in himself. The people, who were his instrument, and who became through him the mightiest people on the face of the earth, even before Mahomet's time, living in old hereditary freedom, combining the glory of arms with love for soul-inspired poetry, not wholly unacquainted with the oldest legends of the sacred primitive world, and thereby withal attuned to every lofty sentiment, that people must be called a noble and a high-minded race. After the new impulse which the Arab nation received from Mahomet, their sway soon extended over the most magnificent regions of the earth, from the spice-islands of India to Portugal, and from the Caucasus to the heart of Africa. Mahomet's doctrine, founded upon the highest and purest conceptions of the Godhead, without troubling the reason with incomprehensible mysteries, inculcating, above all virtues, magnanimity, generosity, and inflexible heroic courage, and yet not devoid of fascinating charms for the fancy and the senses—a faith like this, which has so long ruled the world, how could it fail from all sides to seize on and enchain mankind? That perilous and fatal schism between Church and State, which

divided and distracted Christendom, had no place in Mahomet's empire, for in it the two were wholly blended into one. Mahomet's doctrinal system may also boast of being well adapted to mankind, and of being practicable; for it has been realized. Mahomet's ideas have been really carried out, and his peculiar spirit has become that of half Asia and Africa; while in Christianity, on the other hand, in which the life and manners of individuals, as well as of whole nations and entire generations, often stand in surprising and crying opposition to the spirit and the doctrines of its founder, the imperfect approximation to an ideal unattainable by man, gives to the whole system the appearance of an experiment, only half successful. It is scarcely to be wondered at, if a vulgar philosophy should give a manifest preference to this religious system over Christianity. Very differently, however, from this shallow philosophy, has history decided, and long since decided, on the respective influence, which the Christian and Mahometan religions have exerted on civilization and the refinement of the human mind. The spirit of pride and arrogance which, with all its praiseworthy qualities, Mahomet's religious system breathes, and which contrasts so strikingly with the love and humility inculcated by the Christian faith,—this it is that has rendered its action on the world so fatal, and by which the germ of decay was implanted from the very beginning in Islam. Through this arrogance, more inflexible than that of Stoicism, founded, as it is, upon a belief in the true God,—through this very arrogance, the effect of which is the more deadly, the more plausible, and fanatically confiding that belief is, the mind of Mahomet's disciples, after the first burst of enthusiasm, soon became stationary; till at last, even among high-minded nations, it has hardened down into a dull insensibility.

That temptation whereof the Scripture speaks, the seductive offer by which the Founder of Christianity was tried, that the kingdoms of the earth should be his, if he would but worship the spirit of bloodthirstiness, of arrogance, and of self-will,—this temptation Mahomet was unable to withstand. Had he withstood it, had the high-souled Arabs embraced Christianity with all that fiery enthusiasm wherewith they adopted the creed of Mahomet,—then would the loveliest regions of the globe have probably become also the happiest

and the most civilized; then, instead of destructive wars, severing the world, and dividing the minds of men, or of a cold estrangement, Europe and Asia had been united in the most glorious concord. But the spirit of pride, and the very unity of Church and State in Islam, laid the foundation of a despotism, which, grasping all spiritual and temporal power in a single hand, has cramped within its fetters not only all external freedom, but the liberty of the mind itself also.

Acquaintance with a religious system so utterly opposed to the existing faith, had incomparably greater and more important consequences upon the tone of thought and the philosophy of the West, than a few corrupt translations of Aristotle's writings. The unbelief and contempt for religion, of which the emperor Frederick the Second was accused, finds, in some circumstances noticeable at this time, a certain degree of confirmation. With the chemical, medical, and astronomical knowledge derived by the Europeans from the Arabs, an inclination for astrological superstition, for alchemy and magical arts, was very generally propagated. The secrets and esoteric doctrines of the Templars might also furnish another proof of the totally new views of a great inward fermentation in the European mind. In philosophy the effect was the most visible and the most striking. Even in the twelfth century, only one century after the first Crusades, we see in Arnold of Brescia the first effort made to convulse all Christendom by the power of philosophy, and to overthrow the existing Christian constitution of Church and State. Arnold met the fate, that all must meet, who attempt a premature revolution, and fail. Yet the purity of his intention is not to be mistaken, and the far deeper and more enthusiastic tone of philosophy from which he started places him far above later antagonists of the church, who were more fortunate than he. Without exercising such immediate influence on the world, many others propounded new doctrines and systems that were in part dangerous and even noxious to religion. This current of opinion was stemmed and the faith upheld by a German of great intellectual energy, Albertus Magnus, one of those rare spirits, who from time to time we see concentrate in themselves all the learning extant and even attainable in their age, as Aristotle did in his. It would be an error to believe that philosophy holds no place in the history of the world. Even among the Greeks

and Romans, with whom, it was so utterly separated from real life, philosophy sufficiently evinced its powerful influence.

Precisely in that separation and opposition of the intellect to the state, and to the prevalent popular belief in all the states of antiquity, lay the true cause of their downfall. In modern history, from the time of the middle age, philosophy, in its wider extension transformed into public opinion, has shown itself still more clearly to be a power capable of moving the world, either beneficently upholding or violently convulsing it. Like every great movement, the Crusades also dissolved many old bonds, and furthered the cause of freedom; and even where there was a predisposition to it, that of anarchy also. The confusion prevailing in Italy and Germany in the thirteenth century, especially in the latter part of it, was immediately, indeed, occasioned by the destructive contest between the church and the empire, by the mutual antagonism of the two highest powers in Christendom, and therefore cannot be ascribed to the Crusades." Yet the universal agitation and anarchy were by those expeditions accelerated and increased. Even the long absence from Germany of the last great and withal highly intellectual emperor Frederick the Second, laid the germs in that country for this very state of confusion. It reached its highest point, after the house of Hohenstaufen, for a whole century the mightiest in Europe, had, in the person of its last descendant, perished frightfully on the scaffold; and when, from doubtful, unregarded, or repudiated royal elections, it became a matter of uncertainty whether Germany and the world really had still a legitimate emperor. What a poet with rhetorical exaggeration had sung on the death of an earlier emperor might now have been said with reason, "that unhappy and beheaded Europe wept."

Were the two supreme powers in Christendom compared to the heavenly bodies that rule the day and the night, it might now be said that the heavens were darkened, and that in the pope and the emperor that sun and moon which illuminated all eyes and guided all steps were extinguished. But chivalrous courage yet beat in honest hearts, and it was upon a knight that the eyes of the world were turned to summon him to the rescue. Great by his valour and his fortune, by every martial and knightly virtue, by a vigorous and comprehensive understanding, Rodolph of Hapsburg was greater still by his love of justice.

Unwearied in raising again the law that had been trampled under-foot, he was himself judge, himself the protector and promoter of justice ; the first, moreover, who, less by the power of his victorious sword than by the mild sway of justice, renovated Germany, and at the same time founded a mighty empire, the destinies of which from this time forth we may assume one of the most important places in the history of the world.

## LECTURES IX. & X.

### CONTINUED HISTORY OF THE MEDIÆVAL PERIOD AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL EUROPEAN NATIONS.

THE happiness, the glory, and the grandeur of an age depend not exclusively on the abundance of those resources and instruments, which are subservient to the ends of civilization, or which adorn life, but principally upon the use made of those resources by the mind, upon the spirit thereby infused into them, and on the object those energies are directed to, and which are noble and great only when the use of them is such. To look merely at this abundance of resources, our own age, enriched by the heritage of all preceding centuries, would appear, when compared with them, the best, nay, the only one worthy of notice. We should then have but to close the book of history, convinced beforehand that nothing could ever be found comparable for a moment to our own high degree of civilization. But if such a procedure would deprive our age of its very noblest and surest privilege,—the privilege, by the aid of all the resources we now possess, of ascertaining, better than in earlier times was possible, the spirit and the destinies of all past centuries ;—if we honour Homer and Sophocles as great poets, although they knew not that the earth was round, nor the distance of the sun and moon from the earth ; if we admire the strength of soul and the political wisdom of a Solon, a Leonidas, and the Scipios, although they and their age were unacquainted with many inventions and arts, which have become habitual and necessary to us, and even ignorant of things that any schoolboy can now repeat ; if, in fine, however much particular facts, or institutions and customs of antiquity

may be repugnant to reason, and to our moral sense, we do not, on that account, at once and without examination condemn the whole with all its vast intellectual powers and grandeur,—if we do this, why, it may be asked, not exercise the same justice in our judgments upon the middle age? The civilization also of antiquity was not universal and unlimited; founded on the knowledge of all times and all parts of the earth; collected from every clime; artificial and learned; no, it was a natural civilization pregnant with life, proceeding from the very spirit of the people and the times; precisely similar to the culture of the mediæval period, which, surpassing antiquity in many respects, rivalling it in others, or little inferior to it, was no less peculiar than it, in the spirit of the whole. It is to be especially observed, what totally different times are confounded together in the reproaches that are generally heaped on the middle ages. The mediæval age, whatever estimate may be assigned to it, embraces almost a thousand years, or even more, and consists of several epochs distinctly separated from one another.

In the first period of the middle age, that of Charlemagne, and his immediate successors, and of the earlier German emperors, down to the time of Pope Gregory the Seventh, and the great convulsive movements of the Crusades, laws and manners were mild, the character of the age was great and simple, earnest but withal gentle. The writings, the works of art, and in general, all the monuments of the period bear this stamp. It was undoubtedly an age not altogether so ignorant and uncivilized as it is often portrayed. In the middle age, however, as in antiquity, the era of the foundation of states and nations, the era of legislation preceded that of the arts and of general refinement, which are but too often accompanied by relaxation of morals and a disorganization in the state. The second period of the middle age—that of the Crusades—is characterized by a marvellous daring, by lofty enthusiasm, and universal enterprise in real life, as well as in the domain of fancy. The third period, which extends from Rodolph the First to Maximilian, may, as regards the state of manners and the constitution, be called turbulent. Of ignorance, however, and defective civilization, it is scarce possible to accuse an age, wherein the Mediterranean was covered with ships as richly laden, and its coasts by commercial cities as prosperous and powerful as in the most flourishing epoch of

Greece; and such was the case not in the Mediterranean only, but likewise in the Baltic Sea, to the ancients a north almost unknown, and an object of dread;—an age wherein architecture soared with a new flight, and painting attained such high and hitherto unparalleled development and perfection;—an age wherein philosophy, almost too widely cultivated, became an affair of state and of practical life, wherein all the historical and literary knowledge, which was at that time by any channels accessible, was pursued with passionate eagerness and desire, when natural science and mathematics were investigated and studied with untiring energy, until at last the two grand discoveries, by which the mind of man first attained its majority, the discovery of the new hemisphere and planetary motions, that is of the true magnitude of the heavens and earth, crowned the research and labour of centuries.

Not of ignorance, then, is the era of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to be accused; but rather of those moral excesses and crimes, which are but too often wont to follow in the train of commerce and of all higher intellectual refinement. If, however, a certain lawlessness in the manners and a certain harshness and cruelty in many of the laws and institutions of that period cannot be denied, yet it is equally undeniable that this disorganization in the moral relations was not the result of mere feebleness and apathy, but that in the midst of this turbulence great moral energy was still evinced.

This moral energy was most apparent in the still active spirit of chivalry—a spirit which had become predominant, indeed, among the class of princes and nobles, yet had assumed a very different form among the different nations of Europe. In Spain it best retained its original religious tendency. The love of bold martial adventures predominated in England and Normandy, in France and Burgundy, countries which were at that period still closely connected by their manners and social relations. In Germany, when the ancient bonds with the church had been severed, the spirit of chivalry took more of a patriotic direction, and strove by courage and valour to restore justice, and to regenerate the country. Not only in various societies and fraternities, at once chivalrous and patriotic, was this tendency evinced, but in the very history of the German kings and emperors at that epoch; on account of his knightly virtues was Rodolph of Hapsburg raised to the royal dignity, and called by the universal voice to be



the deliverer of a suffering age. His was an election by the whole nation, in substance at least, if not in form, as was of old the election of Conrad the First, whereby he became king of the Germans, and the founder of the empire. In the subsequent elections, moreover, the same universal veneration for knightly virtue was exhibited. Of Rodolph's unhappy, but noble-minded successor, Adolph of Nassau, it might also have been said, when he fell in battle against Albert, that the noblest hero of Germany had fallen. Adorned with all knightly virtues, Henry of Luxemburg was esteemed, as well in Germany as in Italy, the flower of the nobility; like Rodolph, he succeeded by the rich acquisition of Bohemia in founding the greatness of his house; and the world hoped to see him resemble Rodolph in intellectual energies as a law-giver and reformer, when a premature death snatched him from its hopes. How simple was the life of the great Rodolph! Before his elevation, he gave many noble and touching proofs that he was well worthy of the imperial dignity; his martial courage, his integrity, and true piety, seemed so many prognostications as it were of his future greatness. After the empire was committed to his charge, he devoted himself exclusively to the task of watching over the administration of justice, and of restoring the empire. Like so many of our old emperors, inheriting no very extensive family demesnes, he, nevertheless, ruled as a powerful prince with vigorous hand, solely by his individual energy, by his personal character, and the reverence he inspired. Rodolph's character is shown in the clearest light during the great contest with the mighty Ottocar—a spectacle such as history has but seldom displayed. On the one side valour united to gentleness and wisdom; on the other, courage heroic indeed, but yet headstrong and imperious, coupled with cruel violence and blinded by pride. Fortune and victory sided for once with virtue. The beautiful province of Austria had lapsed to the empire as an escheated fief on the extinction of the family of Babenberg during the troubles of the interregnum—a prey to various claims equally untenable, it had been distracted more than any part of Germany, until wrested from the detested Ottocar by the victories of Rodolph. Upon this acquisition, with the concurrence of all the princes of the empire, the latter founded the future power of his house. On the one side reigning over Austria. on the other pre-

serving and augmenting its ancient and extensive hereditary demesnes in Suabia, Alsatia, and Switzerland, that house now united under its sway the loveliest regions of southern Germany.

It was not only the internal tranquillity and order, but the external dignity and grandeur also of the empire, that Rodolph sought to uphold. He was watchful to maintain its ancient rights over Burgundy, a kingdom he had destined for his beloved Hartmann, before the Rhine robbed him of his favourite son. A singularly inauspicious star indeed presided over the destinies of the sons and grandsons of this great emperor, so fortunate in his own life. According to old German custom, a reign glorious as his would have given to his house an almost irresistible claim to the succession. But the olden times had passed away, and if the sense of the nation proved still so energetic, that none dared elect any but a hero already ennobled by lofty virtues, nevertheless the election of a powerful prince was carefully avoided. Herein their views were already clearly evinced by the German princes, as they preferred to sever themselves from the great body of the state, and thereby augment their own power under a feeble emperor, than to undertake the arduous duties of the imperial dignity themselves. Another injurious influence displayed itself likewise in these imperial elections. For whole centuries had it been a subject of bloody feud, whether the papal power possessed the right of recognising and confirming an election, which gave not only to the Germans a king, but to all Christendom a temporal head, and now an archbishop of Mayence boasted that he could himself instal and depose the German kings at pleasure! In addition to this, the kings of France were constantly aiming at the imperial crown, and employed their influence over the popes then resident at Avignon to excite factions in Germany. This disposition of the princes, and these factions, were the cause why the great Rodolph's desire to secure the imperial diadem, which he had worn himself with so much glory to his house, was not accomplished until a later period. Albert's mind may have been soured and embittered by the refusal to confer on him the expected crown. And when he had at last won it, it was only by war and his rival's death that he succeeded in fixing it firmly on his brow, but only to be bereaved at once of a crown and life by the murderous lance

of his own nephew, a youth blinded by anger and hatred. The emperor Albert was not so mild and magnanimous as Rodolph, yet we cannot deny that, with all his sternness and severity, in his reverence for justice he equalled his father. To blame him exclusively for the events that occurred in Switzerland, to paint him as the cruellest of tyrants, in order that the picture of Swiss enfranchisement may make a more vivid impression, were to judge, as often happens, accidental consequences, rather than the real facts, and the spirit of the parties in connection with the circumstances of the time. Not Albert, not any individual prince or sovereign, but the whole nobility of the period, are open to the reproach of having rendered their sway more oppressive and tyrannical than it was originally meant to be, and than in earlier times it had actually been. Even if in their first struggles for freedom, the warlike mountaineers sought only to restrain such excesses, yet in their later enterprises it can scarcely be maintained, that they always observed moderation, or that justice was always on their side. For Germany Albert's death was indisputably a great loss: even a stern emperor would have been preferable to the subsequent party contests. The brilliant hopes which the chivalrous Henry of Luxemburg had excited, were immediately extinguished by his premature death. The rival claims of the houses of Luxemburg and Austria upon Bohemia, engendered an unhappy discord between them, and occasioned a double election. Simultaneously with Frederick the Fair, the third emperor of the line of Hapsburg, Lewis the Bavarian was, by the influence of the house of Bohemia-Luxemburg, called to the throne.

The history of the long reign of the latter is remarkable only for his struggle with Frederick the Fair, by a renewal of the vehement contest with the Church, and by the augmentation of his hereditary domains through the acquisition, not altogether legitimate, of Brandenburg, the Tyrol, and Holland. He was not animated with the chivalrous spirit which we remark in the other emperors of that age, wherein, among all the sovereign houses, not one was so distinguished as the Austrian. Who is ignorant how, after long wars, a lost battle threw Frederick the Fair into the hands of his rival; how by him he was treated with great severity, and forced to purchase his freedom by a most disadvantageous peace; how he was prevented by the angry violence of his faithful

but ambitious brother, Leopold, from fulfilling the terms of the compact, and then, unlike King Francis the First in later times, true to his honour and his plighted word, he surrendered himself once more as a prisoner to his foe? Deeds like these in the ancestral chronicles of kings are indeed their brightest ornaments, and badges of genuine honour. Even the heart of Lewis the Bavarian was moved by it, although not for any length of time.

Yet the self-devotion of the high-minded Frederick gave no peace to Germany. Bavaria and Bohemia, under the earlier Luxemburg princes, attended to their own interests exclusively, and hence were disunited. Both aimed at the imperial crown, but only sought upon that imperial dignity to found the glory and the greatness of their own house. Hence, despite their rivalry, their system of government was very similar, and their disjointed dominion of brief duration. The princes of Rodolph's line sought a more exalted sphere of glory; and hence Austria, after many and deep misfortunes, again rose more glorious than ever.

The great parties of Church and Emperor, of Guelphs and Ghibellines, which once divided Germany, had now ceased to exist; so had likewise the old German national races, the Suabians, Franks, Saxons, and Bavarians, by whom the king was wont to be elected. Amid the general disorganization, there were only the princely houses of Bohemia, Bavaria, and Austria, that appear as if they were so many parties. The division between the Bohemian and Bavarian parties was designedly kept up by France. If the long reign of Charles the Fourth restored a certain kind of peace and tranquillity to the German empire, yet his system of government is by no means what it ought to have been, nor does it merit the praise that has been often lavished on his work, because it corresponded with the views of the more powerful princes. The constitution that Charles the Fourth conferred on Germany was by no means a restoration of the ancient national freedom and royal dignity. For that object it would have been, above all, necessary to reestablish the old national duchies of Suabia and Franconia; a restoration which the Austrian emperors, whose principles with regard to the constitution of the empire differed widely from those of the Bavarian and Bohemian princes, more than once attempted. Notwithstanding the sacred number seven, which was fixed upon for

the number of the electors, the golden bull was on the whole arbitrarily drawn up, with a view to promote certain collateral interests of the time.

It was a work without internal unity, whereby, as in after-times by the treaty of Westphalia, the great evils of the state, far from being radically healed, were only rendered painfully endurable, and thereby even perpetuated. By elevating a few powerful princes to so great a degree of power, and by rendering them almost independent, the emperor surrendered his noblest privilege, that of being the protector of the general freedom, and himself laid the foundation for those internal partitions and subdivisions of Germany, which, step by step, brought about the total downfall of the imperial dignity.

Bohemia, however, under Charles the Fourth, attained to so high a degree of material prosperity, as well as of refinement in the arts and sciences, and in the cultivation of its national language, as far to outstrip all other Slavonic nations. That in the constitution he gave to the German empire, Charles paid regard to its numerous Slavonic inhabitants, and by special ordinances protected their rights, customs, and language, was only just: it was an individual praiseworthy trait in a work on the whole so imperfect. Although springing from German ancestors, Charles the Fourth, born and bred as he was in Bohemia, had become wholly a Bohemian. As regards Germany, Maximilian was justified in styling him the stepfather of the empire. He was the first to surrender Burgundy, in all, at least, but the empty name; and it was chiefly owing to him and to Lewis the Bavarian, that the empire lost its ancient authority in Italy. Charles the Fourth possessed none of those chivalrous virtues, that had made his ancestor Henry the pride and joy of the German nation, and which had acquired for King John such high renown throughout all European countries. By qualities of another kind, by unwearied activity, by knowledge, and prudence, his reign was really beneficial and glorious for Bohemia, and even apparently so for Germany, until its evil effects were developed in the course of history. To a lower depth, however, than under his son, the deposed Wenceslaus, it was scarcely possible for the empire to sink.

Thus the great work, begun by Rodolph's energy, the regeneration, namely, of Germany, was not to be consum-

mated in the times immediately subsequent to his; but a kind of interregnum and a long period of anarchy was once more to intervene, before his remote descendants Maximilian and Charles the Fifth should again raise the imperial crown and state to their pristine dignity.

The noble spectacle presented to us by several remarkable and powerful political associations, which in this very period of disorganization were formed within the limits of the German empire, prove how vast were the energies that even still dwelled in the body politic of Germany, notwithstanding its now very perceptible political decay. Switzerland, the Hanseatic league, and the principality of the Teutonic order on the coasts of the Baltic, constitute these remarkable and important phenomena. In the earlier struggles of the Swiss, the same energies burst forth, which had, in earlier times, in the northern forests, withstood all the power of Rome. The ancient order of freemen, the real martial core of the nation, had been better preserved in these mountains than in the low-land countries. It had been fortunate for the noble-minded Swiss if they had remained in the same free condition, but under a mild protective sovereignty, and still united with the empire. That the steadfast and daring enterprise of a handful of men sufficed to found a league that has endured for centuries,—nay, to build up a nation and a state, will always excite admiration and sympathy. At first they sought only to put a stop to certain special grievances; but their martial temper soon took a very different turn. They became assailants and conquerors; between the warlike mountaineers and the nobles and knights there arose a species of civil war, which often threatened to spread into other countries, and even to include all Germany in its range. Far more than the noble energies which were wasted in this struggle, is the separation of Switzerland itself to be lamented. The loss of Switzerland did not affect the house of Hapsburg alone; it was the first great blow that fell, not upon the empire merely, but upon Germany herself. The Swiss too, with their internal civil wars, did not at that period enjoy the tranquil prosperity, which different social relations have in after-times secured to them. Their power and warlike fame rose shortly to an extraordinary pitch; but the influence which, as the hired soldiers of belligerent powers, they exercised in the affairs of Europe

during the fifteenth century, was neither conducive to the weal of the state nor worthy of the Swiss people.

The foundation of a new and powerful German state on the Baltic, Prussia namely, under the Teutonic order;—the still earlier settlements of those German colonies, which transformed Silesia, a country altogether Slavonic, into a flourishing German province;—the impulse given by other German colonists in Hungary and Transylvania to the art of mining and to civic refinement—all this furnishes proof of the internal strength, the populousness, and civilization of Germany at that period.

A proof still stronger is supplied by the Hanseatic League—that confederacy of German cities—which forms an epoch in commerce, whose power and influence, predominant in the Baltic, soon stretched over the Scandinavian kingdoms, whose high civilization and municipal constitution may be paralleled with those of the commercial cities of Greece and Italy. If, indeed, in Germany no single city attained to the vast power of Venice, when Venice chiefly held in her hands the keys of oriental commerce with all Europe, yet was Germany nevertheless, in manufactures and in mechanical arts, even superior to Italy. Very remarkable was the whole form of this league of German cities. Therein awoke, as in the Swiss Confederacy, the old federal spirit, that was perceptible even in the very earliest Germanic institutions and manners, a certain predilection for voluntary alliances as a means of general strength and safety.

Thus did each order—knights, burgesses, people—found a peculiar, new, and powerful state in Germany, although the empire itself was falling gradually to pieces. Of these states Switzerland and the Hanse Towns in particular fill a more important place in the picture of the German mind, of German power, and German civilization. And yet incomparably greater, through its extensive historical results, was that new German federal state, which was built up by the chivalrous virtues and unwavering principles of the noblest of our princely houses—the composite state of Austria. A fabric, of which Rodolph himself sketched the ground-plan, and which, amidst all the misfortunes that often overtook individual princes of that house in the interval between Rodolph and Maximilian, was never lost sight of; and to whose further construction many Austrian princes, who did not even attain

to the imperial dignity, by their chivalrous spirit and valour, as well as by their wise laws, essentially contributed. But, in order to sketch this picture in its full extent, we must first cast a glance at the condition of Europe in general; for, now that the ancient relations were broken up, the several nations stood forth in a character more fully developed, and the different states exhibited a better consolidated power; and thus was the way prepared for the great epoch of Maximilian and Charles the Fifth.

In Italy two states only possessed an independent and consistent system of policy, to wit, Rome and Venice. The independence of both rested on a secure basis. Venice, lying between the Greek empire and the west of Europe, had become the greatest maritime power in the Mediterranean. Of Naples the only question was, who should be her master; and, while commerce flourished in the Mediterranean, the connection of Sicily with the south of Spain, after the blood of the last Hohenstaufen had found an avenger in the king of Arragon, was the most natural. The greatest political fermentation, but withal the development of the noblest intellectual powers, occurred in the northern provinces that appertained originally to the empire, Milan and Florence. The power of the Visconti was great; still greater the influence of the Medici upon the mind of Italy and of the whole civilized world. Poetry and architecture, painting and the cultivation of classical literature, received a noble impulse; and, although the Roman see, by its dependency on France, and by the subsequent disputed elections to the papacy, had forfeited much of its authority and influence in Europe; yet Italy, nevertheless, after a new fashion, maintained her old pre-eminence. Her literature and science were disseminated through other nations, and thus constituted a universal bond of connection for all Europe. A bond of a nature perfectly free, and very beneficial, and which might have been much more so, had it not been dissolved by the schism in the Church. In this intellectual culture of Italy, especially as regards classical literature, Germany more immediately partook; Germany which, before the discovery of the two Indies, divided with Italy the commerce of Europe, and rivalled her in all the arts.

The connection generally between the two nations, by commerce as well as by the ties of ancient custom, was very close,



more especially in the northern parts of Italy, in Venice, and Milan, where even the manners were more similar, and the national taste differed less from the German. The ancient reverence for the Imperial dignity, and the prescriptive belief of German power, long retained vitality. Even Dante and Petrarch turned their enthusiastic hopes towards the German emperors, when the sovereignty of the latter in their own country was becoming every day more contracted; and Machiavelli, indeed, was the first to point out to his countrymen, that the power of Germany, despite its apparent extent, was not in reality of the nature it was commonly supposed to be, and was hurrying with rapid strides to its downfall.

Beneficial as was the influence of Italian learning on the rest of Europe, yet equally pernicious was the Italian system of politics, which first won access and obtained imitators in France, and then gradually in most of the other European courts. From the prevailing discord and selfishness of all these powers, it speedily degenerated into a secret or open war of all against all. Florence and Milan were the centres of Italian politics in all their complicated relations. In them anarchy begat perpetual change, in the vortex whereof even Venice and Rome, and speedily Naples, Spain, and France, were hurried away. Even in Italy, although on a petty scale, the history of the Visconti, the Medici, the Sforza, and of so many other petty lords and tyrants, shows how civil discord and sudden revolutions in ancient customs and social relations lead directly and inevitably to absolute power. Within the same period, but on a larger scale, we trace the rapid growth of royal authority in France, England, and even in Spain. France, during the middle age, was far behind Italy and Germany in civilization and internal prosperity; and, even as regards the development of the spirit of chivalry, which was in that country so predominant, the history of the Normans and of the English, while they held possession of a large portion of France, and the history of Burgundy, was far more copious and brilliant than that of France herself. The most striking circumstance in that country is the early establishment of the royal power; the cause whereof may perhaps be found in the very situation of the country and metropolis, as well as in the ancient institutions of the Frankish kings, to which must be added the unceasing and undistracted efforts of the successive

sovereigns. In the great contest between England and France, many martial virtues and distinguished characters appeared on either side; but as exemplifying the chivalrous spirit and the manners of the age, none are so remarkable as the Maid of Orleans. This second foundress and deliverer of the French throne met the fate which, among that nation, so many great characters have encountered, that of being at first passionately deified, and subsequently as deeply depreciated. After the envy and treachery of her own companions in arms had abandoned the heroine to a fiery death, she was wholly forgotten; and a certain period elapsed before the man, who owed his kingdom to her alone, recollected the duty of vindicating her glory and fame. Even in modern times, the noblest name and character, to which French history could point in the romantic middle age, was only perverted into a subject of vituperation. An excellent German poet has been the first to celebrate once more the heroine of France; yet the historic truth rises far superior to this poetic delineation. Joan bore the sword, as she did the banner at the head of her army, only as a token of victory; she was quite incapable of any unfeminine cruelty, or of shedding blood; and though more than once she herself was wounded, yet she never slew a foe, never spilled blood; neither did any other earthly passion find entrance into her heart, save love for her native country, for the descendant of St. Louis, and for the lilies of France, to vindicate whose honour she threw herself many a time into the storm of battle, and at last perished in the flames.

After the great contests with England had terminated favourably for France,—thanks to this heroine and to England's internal divisions,—we see despotism fully established by the mistrustful and cruel Lewis the Eleventh. Thus in every age, after great political convulsions, authority is armed with redoubled force.

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It is difficult accurately to seize upon the points wherein the peculiar character of a nation consists, to select and define its individual distinguishing traits. Often does the individual man even appear to the observing mind a problem of difficult solution; and in the vast theatre of history, with how marvellous a variety is not human nature developed. Yet is this precisely the most attractive and instructive part of his-

tory; for each remarkable and significant national character must we contemplate as a new and peculiar development of the human mind, and as a variety in our own being. Although the whole character of a nation, with all its peculiarities, can at the most be pointed out and unfolded only in a detailed narrative, and even then must often be rather felt than defined, and can never be embodied in a few words of general definition; yet some general rules at least may be laid down, as to the quarter to which our glance must be directed, the conditions under which the principal traits of a nation are to be looked for, and the great movements whereby its full development was occasioned. In this respect and in this sense we may say, that the character of all the great nations of western Europe, which were included in the system of civilized states in the fifteenth century, the Italians, namely, and the French, the English, and the Spaniards, is to be accounted for by two leading facts—by the peculiar form which the great Germanic migration assumed in each of these nations, and by the influence, which the crusades and the institution of chivalry exercised over each particular state. So in later times we may lay it down as a general rule, that the character of each European nation, as well as its civilization, was moulded by the influence which the Indian trade exercised upon each, and by the special form which the Reformation assumed in each country. Thus the Germanic migration and the crusades, taking as they did a peculiar form in each country, and exerting a special influence on each people, thereby formed the several characters of the European nations. It required the fusion of Goths and Arabs in order to mould the Spanish mind. The ceaseless war waged for entire centuries against the Moors, not merely in remote lands in quest of adventure and of fame, but carried on in their very home and in defence of their country and their hearths, gave to the Spanish mind that earnest enthusiasm, that has become a permanent characteristic of the nation. The English constitution sprang out of Anglo-Saxon and Norman elements; while in the chivalrous spirit of the crusades was enkindled the war of a hundred years, that at that period raged between England and France, and whereby both those states first developed their full strength. The Italian civilization received from the Levantine and Byzantine commerce its peculiar character; and even

without the Turkish conquest of Constantinople, and the arrival of the Greek refugees, this influence, though perhaps at a somewhat later period, and more slowly, would have been exerted.

When the nations of Europe were no longer united in warfare against a common foe, in the distant East, they turned the more readily their strength against each other, as did France and England, or as happened in Spain, the constitution of the state was founded and completed without any extraneous influence whatever. Among almost all the western nations, the internal wants of the state and the condition of the nobility brought about alike these constitutional changes. Chivalry, and the severe system of knightly manners associated with it, had never become universal. Even those bonds, which the church had once formed between all the nations of Europe, and between all the classes of each nation, had become far feebler and more relaxed. In proportion to the various complications in which feudal relations became now involved, was the sanctity of the feudal tie diminished. The great vassals were grown almost independent, and exercised the highest prerogatives of sovereign power, which they thus partitioned among themselves, and thus exhibited among themselves and in relation to the other orders, a state of confusion and lawlessness. But this very state of things led men back to the law, and to the anointed representative thereof. This was wholesome and necessary, and the change may be termed a happy one, when the constitution of the three estates was purified, for entirely to sacrifice or destroy it would only have been to exchange one evil for another. Hence we see in all countries during this period the regal authority grow rapidly to such a height and strength, that in the sequel its prerogatives in some countries by the reaction which naturally arose have been much abated. In France the growth of regal power had been long prepared. Even in the older French history we seldom light upon a character like that of Lewis the Ninth, who did not study the interests of France merely as well as his own power, but those of all Europe and the universal weal. In history we must chiefly seek out and dwell upon characters thus beneficent and truly great, instead of singling out, as do modern historians, almost exclusively, kings such as Philip Augustus, Philip the Fair, and others like them, who were bent upon and who succeeded in aggrandizing their own power

on every side. Our knowledge of earlier history is still much obscured by the fact, that the system of absolute monarchy, or of universal equality, whereof the latter so soon brings back the former, alone arrests the attention of most writers. History might then justly be called the teacher of life and the school of wisdom, if she but taught us to withstand the mode of thinking prevalent in the present age, with all its deceptive pretences, and to appreciate the constitution of parliamentary estates and the grounds of its superiority, a constitution, wherein a nobility, strong, but regulated by law, neither weakens the authority of the king, nor crushes the liberties of the people, but links them together, and vivifies them alike. In France under Lewis the Ninth the royal power was augmented, and under Lewis the Eleventh appears almost unlimited. Burgundy, a new power, which had arisen during the contest with England, and to which the good-fortune and the merit of its chiefs had imparted such rapid growth, alone for a time counterbalanced the preponderance of France.

Commercial activity and manufacturing industry had now made Burgundy, and especially the Netherlands, the wealthiest country perhaps in Europe. All the arts, which amongst an energetic people, are wont to follow in the train of wealth and commerce, flourished to the highest extent, and seemed to warrant the sovereign of such a state in schemes and pretensions so aspiring as were those of Charles the Bold. These great schemes, however, too impetuously and recklessly pursued, upon encountering the secret arts of Lewis the Ninth and the valour of the Swiss, were at last utterly wrecked. The events that in France had been long preparing the aggrandizement of regal power, were in England suddenly and swiftly developed. After the glorious conquests of Edward the Third, the victory of the Black Prince, the successes of Henry the Fifth, whom a poet of his nation pictures to us as the flower and favourite of his countrymen, and upon whose premature death the noblest hopes of that heroic age sank with him into the tomb—after all this, the martial energies of England were turned against herself in the bloody feuds of York and Lancaster. In animosity and in atrocious deeds, these civil conflicts renewed the old tragedy of the Guelphs and Ghibellines. In the French wars, the

English, victorious over armies of thrice their own strength, often proved themselves the first people of the age, not only in courage but in military art. With energies such as these, the civil wars were rendered all the more desolating and savage, and, as always happens amid the general exhaustion consequent on civil commotions, when peace at last ensued, they led to the enlargement of monarchic power.

This power we see Henry the Eighth exercise to an extent, which scarcely any French king had done; and despite the maintenance of ancient forms, an unlimited despotism was in reality exercised by him. In Spain the unity of the state could be only a work of gradual growth; for it was not originally a single kingdom, but consisted of two distinct parts. On the one side were the Spaniards in the northern mountains, who had never been subdued by the Arabs, and whose chiefs sprang from the ancient Gothic line of kings, and who had early founded the kingdoms of Castile and Leon. On the other side was the kingdom of Navarre, founded by the counts of the French marches, who had acquired independence. These were the two foundations of the Christian power in Spain. Although at one time they were both united, and some of the earlier Spanish kings had hereby attained considerable power, yet from the customary partitions of heritage their territories were soon again dismembered. Portugal, an off-shoot of Castile, was permanently separated; Arragon, founded by Navarre, formed an independent kingdom. Castile and Arragon, northern and southern Spain, differed then in language, manners, institutions, and civilization, even more than they do now. Southern Spain, through its Mediterranean commerce, attained sooner a flourishing state of prosperity. Here, in Barcelona and Valencia, in the most beautiful climate of Europe, as well as in southern France, was the native seat of that sweet Provençal poetry, so much spoken of by the older Italians, and which was styled the "joyous science." The warlike and grave Castilian subsequently acquired the preponderance. In general history Spain first obtains a place, after the union of Arragon with Castile under Ferdinand and Isabella, and the conquest of Grenada, when it became one of the great and leading powers of Europe. In the joint reign and history of Ferdinand the Catholic and Isabella we must

carefully discriminate between the two sovereigns. Ferdinand can scarcely be vindicated from the charge of having sought to aggrandize his power even by unjust means. Very different was the case with the virtuous Isabella, whose understanding was as vigorous as her soul was pure. With pious enthusiasm she incited her chivalry to arms, in order to liberate the last spot of Spanish ground from the yoke of the stranger; and in peace she watched with unwearied care over the interests of her people. At her side stood the great Ximenes, at once a churchman in the fullest, strictest sense of the word, a scholar, a profound far-seeing statesman, and a hero in courage and strategic skill, in defence of his native land against the ancient foes of Spain and the Christian faith. Both Ximenes and Isabella were worthy of each other. It was an age abounding in characters vehement, passionate, despotic, like Charles the Bold, Charles the Eighth of France, and in hateful and crafty ones, like Lewis the Eleventh, and the violent Henry the Eighth of England. Not seldom, however, is the eye gladdened also by the aspect of lofty virtues. At this time we see everywhere that multitude of great characters and distinguished minds, that universal stir and fulness of life in rapid and unexpected development, which precede a truly great epoch, one that is great not merely by outward commotions and accidental conquests, but by its spirit and inward energy. If Ferdinand the Catholic aimed at absolute sway quite as much as Henry in England and Lewis in France, yet under the freer constitution of Spain the attempt was for the moment far less practicable. The power enjoyed by the estates of the realm and by the cortes was too great and too well organized. Not only the nobility, but the cities also in that country were extremely powerful; so that, when internal commotions broke out, a kind of civil war, as in Germany, was carried on between the nobles and the cities. In Spain, more than elsewhere, was the whole tone of thought of the nation pervaded by the spirit of chivalry; and hence the high moral strength and dignity it exhibited during this period.

In the progress of modern times, so far, at least, as it has been determined by one great event—the new trade with the East Indies—no people made such early and rapid advances as the Portuguese. By systematic and extended maritime

voyages, and by their improvements in the art of navigation, they had been for nearly a century preparing the way to the discovery of India, till at last the brilliant result crowned their daring efforts. It is hence conceivable, as all the energies of this nation had already long taken this direction, how in a period so brief all the most fertile coasts of India and Africa were covered with Portuguese ships, as once they had been with Arabian ones, emporiums, settlements, and permanent possessions. Marvels of courage and of daring, bordering on the utterly incredible, were accomplished by the Portuguese in the brief heroic age of their flourishing power. On them and the fortunate Gama devolved the fairest share of the new world, for they gained a living commerce; Spain, at first, but barren gold. Instead of the gorgeous India that his soul sought after, the India so much lauded in the recitals of the ancients, the unfortunate Columbus, wrestling with every danger, with every misfortune, and, above all, with ingratitude, even to the hour of his death, discovered only a huge continent, utterly dissimilar to the old world in the form of its plants and animals; a land savage itself, and inhabited by savages; a land which, at a subsequent period, when numerous colonies had followed in the track of conquest, was to be a nursery of European races and European freedom. At that time, when suddenly all the wealth of India was flowing into the capital of Portugal, when her ships raled every sea, astonished Europe might well surname the Portuguese king Emanuel the Great. But precisely because the Portuguese nation poured out all its energies into the new world, was its immediate influence upon the system of European states null, or at least extremely slight; and in the short duration of its prosperity and power, this people, then so conspicuous for daring courage and spirit, may be compared with those plants that bloom but for a few hours, yet whose short-lived blossoms outshine in brilliancy and beauty every flower beside.

Italy, and still more Germany, were the most immediate losers by this newly-established commerce. Both were deprived of the greater part of their then existing trade. To Germany the loss must be added, that the value of the national mines, till then considerable, was greatly depreciated, nay, became utterly insignificant, measured by the new scale of the treasures of Peru.



The more the new era of Maximilian and of Charles the Fifth, from the rich variety of great phenomena it displays, comprises within itself an epitome of the world's history, the more needful is it for us to scan the then condition of the world, in order to judge accurately what were the great and good objects aimed at and achieved by either of those monarchs.

The character of the western nations of Europe, as I have before remarked, was variously moulded according to the special form assumed in each country by the Germanic migration, and according to the kind and degree of action exerted on each by the crusades, as well as by the new commerce with India. These are the most effective points of comparison, in discriminating the national mind and the state of civilization, that characterized the Italians, Spaniards, French, and English. But this standard is inapplicable to the northern and eastern peoples, either because they did not lie within the range of these great historical events, or because these events exerted, if any, only a remote and mediate influence upon them. The national spirit and the state of civilization of these northern and eastern peoples may be deduced, perhaps, with the most clearness and effect, from the original tribe-character of each; from the relations, on the one side, in which each stood to the Asiatic states, and on the other from the degree of intellectual culture each may have derived from western and southern Europe. A few words will suffice to remind our hearers of the relations in which the most important of these nations stood in general at that time to the European system of states, and to the new and great epoch that was in the course of development.

In the time of the Hohenstaufen, when the energies of Germany were turned upon Italy, and absorbed in domestic contests, Denmark had extended her power in northern Germany, and on the German coasts of the Baltic. Her influence, however, speedily disappeared, and the powerful German Hanseatic league, unrivalled in naval architecture, and mistress of the Baltic, rather reduced the three northern kingdoms to a state of dependence. United as these kingdoms were in the fifteenth century, they might have formed one powerful state; but theirs was a union without real unity; the ferment in the minds of men already existed, which

speedily led to the separation of Sweden, and which, under the descendants of Wasa, was destined to raise her to so much power, and insure her such decisive influence upon the affairs of Europe. At this period these three united kingdoms of the north were wholly occupied with their own domestic concerns, and had little or no influence on the political system of Europe. Russia lay wholly beyond the scope of that system; her great and powerful commercial cities alone were connected with the German Hanseatic league. Very powerful even in early times, she had received, together with Christianity, a considerable share of her intellectual culture from Constantinople. But this Byzantine culture never possessed that stirring, vital strength, that was ever evinced in the civilization of the West, that had sprung out of the fusion of the Roman and Germanic minds. But all this civilization in Russia was again destroyed under the tyranny of the Moguls, who, under Ghengis Khan and his successors, ruled over all northern Asia; who, on the one side, fought great battles in Silesia, and on the other waged war with Japan, devastated Poland and Hungary, and filled the rest of Europe with terror and dismay. Towards the end of the fifteenth century, Vasiliwitch, who has been called the Great, became the restorer of the Russian empire, which was then only heard of as a kind of unknown world by tales of marvellous adventure. Poland, by the downfall of Russia, and by its union with Lithuania, had now become a considerable state; but one, however, still altogether military, wholly engrossed by its domestic affairs, and destitute of influence over the political system of Europe. Even her wars, and her political relations with the Teutonic knights in Prussia, were attended with no important effects on the German empire at large. After she had adopted Christianity, Poland belonged, indeed, through the Roman Catholic religion, to the political system of Europe, but her old connection with Germany had been gradually dissolved. The German colonies could not here, as in Hungary, exert any influence over the state in general, and the cities in particular, as they were confined to the single province of Silesia; and this was still more the case when that province was separated from Poland, and became united to Bohemia. Thus were states founded, in this age so fertile in fresh energies; thus

were nations developed ; thus the way prepared for mighty events ; great men arose even in distant countries, the most remote from western and central Europe. A very important and active member of the then political system was Hungary. No Christian people of Europe displayed so visibly, and preserved so faithfully, its Asiatic national character, yet none had participated so largely in the civilization of western Europe. They received it contemporaneously with Christianity, through the medium of those numerous colonies from Germany, in the time of Stephen the Great, and subsequently, which were so much favoured by the kings of the family of Arpad, and which not only augmented the population and power, but also promoted the civilization of the country. Under the Kings of the house of Anjou an intercourse with Italy sprang up. The influence upon Hungary of the intellectual culture of Italy prevailed so exclusively in the reign of Matthias Corvinus, that disregard of Hungarian nationality was made matter of reproach to that prince. In him, too, was perceptible that endeavour to enlarge the royal power, which was now witnessed in almost all countries. The impetuous, the heroic energy, whereby his illustrious father, Hunyad, proved himself a bulwark against Turkish ascendancy, was in part directed by Matthias against Austria and other neighbouring Christian states, instead of being turned exclusively against the common foe. The Turkish conquests, whereby Asia retaliated the crusades upon the western peoples, gave rise to a Mahomedan state in the loveliest regions of Europe, and exercised decisive influence upon this quarter of the world ; for when great energies exist, nothing is so calculated to develop them suddenly and rapidly as the presence of a great and common danger. It was not only danger to the states and to the faith, but also danger to the nations themselves, and to their intellectual culture, with which Europe was threatened by the Turks. The latter were by no means indeed to be termed an altogether rude and ignorant people ; for all the productions of the most polished Mahomedan nations, the Persians and Arabs, in science, in literature, and in poetry, were known to them, appropriated, imitated, and naturalized among them, somewhat as were Grecian science and literature by the warlike Romans. As a great naval power, and as a commercial

state, the Turkish empire could not possibly forego the advantages of civilization, or remain altogether estranged from it. But not to speak of the arrogance inherent in their very creed, which renders all Mahomedans so incomparably less susceptible and capable of all higher progress in civilization, yet were the Turks at that time, if not in themselves, at least in their relations to Europe as conquerors, justly obnoxious to the title of barbarians. Their whole devastating system of warfare, their mode of treating conquered countries, their habit of carrying away many hundred thousands into slavery, their oppressive system of tribute,—all this (even setting aside the excesses of fanaticism) was calculated with reason to render their sway truly terrific, and to spread throughout all Christian countries universal dismay. The danger was the more imminent, because in the then blooming period of their power there was no want of great sovereigns and heroes among them, many of whom may have seriously entertained the idea of converting not only Hungary, but even Poland and Germany, into a Turkish pashalic. Even the western countries, although secure on the land side, still so long as the Turks were powerful and almost supreme in the Mediterranean, and the piratical states of Africa remained under their influence, suffered incalculable losses along their flourishing sea-coasts. By this great and common danger Europe was awakened from her slumber; and in Spain, in Italy, in Germany, yea even in France, until King Francis the First set the first example of an opposite sentiment, enthusiasm against the foes of the Christian faith and Christian manners was then the predominant feeling.

Ages of universal commotion, which constitute epochs in history, are usually brought about in a twofold manner.

The original causes and first beginnings of every great event are generally in existence for a length of time, although invisible to the multitude, and work in secret, until some shock from without precipitates a sudden outbreak. It would seem as if the human race, in the throes of its development, needed a perpetual alternation, and, oscillating between long periods of tranquil progress and brief epochs of universal convulsion, worked its onward way towards its hidden goal. It was so in the Germanic migration and in the crusades, and so was it now too in the age of Charles the Fifth. The

cause of the great movements of this age lay in the universal unfolding of their moral and intellectual powers among the western states and nations. In Spain, England, France, and Italy, these powers reached maturity at about the very time, when Germany was likewise rising anew to her pristine greatness: when, on the one side, the discovery of two unknown worlds had imparted fresh life and given unexpected impulse to Europe; and, on the other, the Turkish conquerors had struck by their rapid progress terror into Christendom, and summoned her to a war of self-defence. This twofold movement produced a sudden development of extraordinary powers, whose action indeed was displayed rather in discord than in concord, but the like whereof the history of the world has but rarely shown. This may be appropriately called the age of Charles the Fifth, not because he had called it into being or created it; for this no individual man however great, no ruler however powerful, has ever alone accomplished; rather had he during his whole life waged a protracted warfare against his age, and striven to stem its headlong current. But the period may be rightly associated with his name, because his powerful mind best comprehended the entire scope of the prevailing movement, and sought to preserve the unity of Europe.

After this survey of the European world,—of all the states and nations, which mediately or immediately, as defenders or opponents, were to take part in the great contest; after a review of all the elements, which were already preparing the way for the development of the new epoch, and which contributed to mould its character—let us now return to Germany and Italy, which still remained the centre not only of European civilization, but of European politics. Germany, after having, in consequence of constitutional changes, sunk, under the Bohemian emperor Charles, into a feeble and disorganized condition, and after her imperial crown seemed to have utterly lost all authority and respect under Wenceslaus, began to rise anew under the last Bohemian emperor Sigismund. This was attributable partly to the power he possessed as king of Hungary, albeit his reign in that country was not untroubled; but principally to the two great general councils of Constance and of Basel. These councils Sigismund, true to the ancient idea of the emperor as the protector of

the church and of the whole Christian republic of Europe, supported with the utmost zeal. He was moved to this zeal indeed by a special cause more nearly touching his own interest, for he needed these general assemblies of the church, and the expression of public opinion they formed, in order to subdue more readily the Hussites, either by forcible or by peaceful means. The sanguinary novelties of the Hussites originated not in any philosophical theory embracing the entire system of the Catholic faith, as in the case of Arnold of Brescia, but in the denial of some particular mysteries and rites of Christianity. These doctrines, first broached by a German, had been developed in England, and thence transplanted to Prague, had found in the troubled and disorganized state of the empire material and fuel enough to excite a great popular commotion. And now in these bloody Hussite wars we, for the first time, perceive what frightful effects must ensue, when the affairs of the church and of Christianity, neglected by their spiritual and temporal heads, whose first duty it had been to watch over them, at last devolve upon a passionately excited people, and have to be decided by a desolating civil war.

The dependent condition of the popes at Avignon had led to double elections, and, as some nations recognised one and some the other of the two popes as legitimate and validly elected, a universal disrapture, a schism of the western church was the result. This schism produced so many injurious effects upon modes of thinking, upon manners, upon the state, and upon the public condition in general, that it was rightly regarded as the greatest calamity by contemporaries. Little as those councils fulfilled the hopes that had been entertained of them, heavy as is the censure that their proceedings and decrees have in many respects brought down, yet they nevertheless contributed in an extraordinary degree to revive the connection between the several European states, as members of a common Christian republic, and thus served to prepare the way for the subsequent epoch. Their more immediate object, to effect a valid election of the supreme head of the church, and to secure his independence, was indeed attained, but was in one respect dearly purchased. At first, in order to allay more easily the difficulties springing from a schism scarcely composed, men, meritorious indeed, but distin-

guished also by their high birth, were elected as heads of the church. This was a proceeding in itself as little open to absolute censure, as it was for the popes, when once more restored to Rome, zealously to engage in the task of the political restoration and conservation of the ecclesiastical states—the guarantee of their independence. The fifteenth century, too, can point to several popes great and distinguished by their learning and character. But only too easily do men pass from one extreme to another. What was at first merely a just anxiety for the maintenance of an independence that had been long curtailed, speedily appeared to become the chief aim of policy. The endeavours of the great princely houses to acquire the supreme ecclesiastical dignity; regard for high birth and secular power gained in the papal elections an overweening influence: and, in general, the national Italian prince often occupied the place of the supreme ecclesiastical chief. The warlike Julius the Second, who would have gained great glory on a temporal throne, did not less injure the Roman see in public opinion, than did the bad moral reputation of Alexander the Sixth. Leo the Tenth himself, the son of the great Lorenzo, the patron of Raphael, possessed many qualities which entitled him to the honour of giving his name to the age of the revival of learning; but in those qualifications, which were more immediately suited to his high calling, and which would have enabled him to preserve the religious unity of Europe, he was far more deficient. An ascetic Ximenes, whose powerful mind included in its grasp political affairs and social relations equally with the graver learning of his age, would have then been better on the Roman throne than all the Medici.

If the concentration in the person of Sigismund of royal and imperial power; if the revival of the old idea that the nations of western Christendom formed a great brotherhood; if the primacy of honour and the influence thereby accruing to the emperor contributed much to exalt once more the fallen imperial dignity, yet the union of the houses of Luxemburg and Austria, realized likewise in the person of Sigismund, produced consequences no less fortunate for all Germany. The germ of discord was removed by this union of the two princely houses, the most powerful at that time in Germany; for Bavaria, which had been so much aggrandized

under the emperor Lewis, had again lost most of its new acquisitions. The great hopes, it is true, both for Germany and for the grandeur of his own house, which the emperor Albert the Second had inspired, were blasted by his premature death. Moreover, the long-desired union between Austria and Hungary was on the death of the youthful Ladislaus interrupted, until at a subsequent period it was renewed by Maximilian. The imperial dignity, however, still remained uninterruptedly in that princely house, which, since the time of Rodolph, possessed so many claims thereto, and which, by its chivalrous virtues and political principles, was more capable than any other of reviving its ancient splendour. Frederick the Fourth laboured strenuously to uphold the imperial prerogatives, although, from the weakness of his hereditary states, he was unable successfully to withstand the superior armies of Hungary under Matthias Corvinus.

With all the apparent calm and nonchalance of his singular character, we cannot deny him the possession of learning, intellect, and prudence; qualities whereby he acquired no inconsiderable influence over the affairs of Europe. But the second founder of the Austrian house and of Austrian power was, in truth, his son Maximilian. If, despite the good fortune which sometimes attended him, he had oftener need of fortitude; if his active and restless life was one unbroken struggle; if he was unable to realize many of his greatest schemes, yet his genius nevertheless remained by no means without influence. More by that genius than by outward power did he become the renovator of Germany, especially of her constitution, her manners, her general modes of thinking, and her civilization. Thus he had the chief agency in calling into being and laying the foundations of the new epoch.

## LECTURE XI.

### THE AGE OF THE EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN.

WHEN an age is ripe for a general convulsion, it needs but a single shock, but a single spark, and the flames burst forth on all sides. Such was now the condition of Europe. The



royal authority in France, in Spain, and England had simultaneously with the national energies been developed to an unwonted degree; the power of Switzerland and the genius of Italy had attained their highest pitch, and Germany was already nurturing the youthful hero, who was destined to raise her once more to her ancient dignity, when she was the first state, the first nation in Europe. The Burgundian war—the ambition of Charles the Bold, enkindled by his innate spirit of chivalry, by the ancient name of Burgundy, by the vast wealth of his dominions, by his own proud heart, and by the example of Alexander the Great—was this first shock, that for upwards of a century and a half threw all Europe into the convulsions of war. The Swiss overthrew the Burgundians in three immortal battles, the last of which the daring hero Charles could not survive, and thereby laid themselves the foundation for the grandeur of the house of Hapsburg, with whom they had been at feud for a century and a half, and with an exasperation that far exceeded the limits of the first rupture. Even before the fatal ambition of the daring hero had broken out in the Swiss war, the emperor Frederick the Fourth had taken, as he believed, the best means to secure the greatness of his house and the dignity of the empire, by betrothing his son Maximilian to the heiress of Burgundy. Whether, on his interview with Charles, the violence of the Burgundian, or the envious suggestions of the French king Lewis alarmed him, and induced his speedy departure, cannot be decided. Both sovereigns must have been equally alien to the temper of the pacific and honourable emperor. In the wild attack which Charles undertook against the empire, Frederick proved that if he loved peace, it was not from weakness or from mere love of ease. It was the object of the duke of Burgundy to erect those central provinces between France and Germany, which since the times of Charlemagne and the Carlovingsians had been connected by so many ancient ties, into a kingdom, which was to stretch from the North Sea to the Alps, perhaps even to the southern coasts of Provence. Such a kingdom would have been with justice called a Burgundian one, would have satisfied, nay have surpassed, the claims associated with the name, and Charles would have become a king, not only in name, but in reality. He was foiled (as indeed failure had often attended the attacks of a

bold and chivalrous nobility, which, however, was not organized upon the new tactical system), by the unconquerable bravery of the Swiss peasantry. What policy had been unable to effect was now accomplished by love and heroism; for we can say with truth, that it was love which knit the bonds between Mary of Burgundy and the youthful Maximilian. This is confirmed by the intimate concord which animated the souls of both during their brief union. It appears also in the open and quite unexpected declaration made by Mary to the assembled States, that were hesitating to decide between France and the other claimants to her hand. She announced to them that she had already long plighted troth to Maximilian by written promise and by interchange of rings, and hence could not now retract. Maximilian eagerly responded to these words, so flattering both to his feelings and to his love of fame, with suitable deeds of daring, and in the confusion of those times had full opportunity to furnish the first arduous proofs of knightly heroism. Thus begins the history of the great emperor, more like a romance of chivalry than the first unfolding of important political events. To him love was no idle play of the imagination—no empty dream of youth; but the flame which enkindled him to great deeds. Even as a mere youth, when dealing with the veteran politician Lewis the Eleventh, who had grown grey in the arts of dissimulation, he gave proof of a strong understanding; and the constancy, that never deserted him in the midst of the insurgent people, showed that he possessed not only the courage of the valiant knight in the day of battle, but also that far more rare and lofty courage, which never suffered him to be bowed down or shaken, which kept him always master of himself, even when deprived of arms, and in the hands of the enemy, and ever mindful of his own honour and dignity. It was given to him to unite what is so rarely united, heroic energy with tender gentleness. He, who fighting against superior numbers, had himself worsted so many in the battle-field,—who, for knightly sport and recreation, used, like the fabulous heroes of antiquity, to vanquish lions with his own hand,—who on their own terrific crags left behind him some of the boldest hunters of the Alps,—who made it his amusement, in his headlong course, to sport with danger,—he was at the same time susceptible of the tenderest emotions.

Of his first beloved wife, who was so quickly snatched away from him, he could never speak or think for years after her death without emotion and tears ;—to his father, whom he so much surpassed in energy and intellect, he yet invariably evinced the most pious reverence and filial devotedness, never presuming on his superior faculties. Although born a warrior and a general, he was nevertheless, both by sentiment and on principle, a lover of peace ; and, as far as was compatible with honour and the accomplishment of his great objects, he ever preferred peaceful negotiations to an appeal to arms, and showed unwearied patience and pliancy in all transactions and affairs of state.

This great and virtuous emperor has been often aspersed by the depreciatory criticisms both of native and foreign historians, simply and exclusively because he was unable to execute all his great schemes. As though the noblest and best ideas were those, which so thoroughly correspond to the wishes of the multitude, that any one who but possesses power and is favoured by fortune, may comprehend, nay even realize them ;—as though that very thing is not often the hardest to accomplish, which yet is alone right and truly great, which the multitude and the age do not as yet spontaneously desire and believe in, but which is still necessary for them in order to raise them above themselves ;—as though in a noble contest with the spirit of an age, greater moral heroism may not be evinced, than by taking advantage of its weaknesses.

And after all Maximilian achieved more, and exerted greater influence on his own age and Europe itself, than any of the three French kings, who were his contemporaries, although they possessed far greater power ; more too than all the subtle Italian politicians, who thought they so often far surpassed and overreached him, as every one else born on this side of the Alps. As regards his internal policy in Germany and Austria, the Catholic Queen Isabella and Ximenes, can alone, among his contemporaries, sustain a comparison with him. While yet in the flower of his age, and, as it were, at a stroke, he saved his Burgundian heritage, the preservation of which, under the circumstances, surpassed all expectation ; he delivered Austria from Hungary after the death of Matthias Corvinus, and although in this quarter he was neither able nor willing further to follow up

his advantages and victories, he yet secured the old hereditary claims of Austria upon that crown, and founded upon these two great acquisitions and expectations the future power of his house. Under the sole government of his father, its peace had been often troubled : but with his co-operation it was now fully restored, and its divided strength once more reunited.

Moreover, as he could not always accomplish all that he aimed at, his personal relations to Europe, to Germany, and to his age in general, and the influence he exercised upon them, will be far better understood by reflecting upon the principles that guided him, rather than by narrating his actions and history. The principles according to which Maximilian acted in the affairs and political relations of Europe, as well as of Germany, were identical with those, which his predecessors of the Hapsburg family had long followed, and always kept in view. The only difference was, that he took up these principles with greater energy and zeal, and combined with them many ideas and views altogether original and peculiar. With respect to European affairs, the principles of Austria had been ever the same, from the time of Albert the Second down to Maximilian, yea, even to Charles the Fifth ; namely, to direct all the military force of united Europe against the then universal enemy the Turks, and among the Christian powers to preserve peace as much as possible ; to attain every object rather by way of peaceful negotiation than by force of arms ; and if contests and wars did actually arise, speedily to compose them in the same way, as a family dispute ; to unite the reigning houses more and more into one family ; and, finally, to support in all things the dignity and the authority of the church and of the pope, and uphold the ancient rights and claims of the imperial crown. That even in Italy the Austrian sovereigns never sought to stretch their authority beyond the limits of a supreme protectorate (after the old imperial fashion), or to convert their power into unlimited despotism, is best proved by the result.

These were the principles on which all the Austrian emperors, from Albert the Second to Charles the Fifth, based their policy. They were very different from those of the other European kings, among whom, if any system—any fixed maxims, of government be traceable, they are such only

as tend to the consolidation of absolute power. The Austrian sovereigns, moreover, were guided by the far loftier idea of a Christian republic—of a free and peaceable confederation of all European states and nations. The very first undertaking of the emperor Albert was a vigorous war against the Turks, wherein sickness and death overtook him. It was a great misfortune for Hungary, that after his death, and especially during the reign of Matthias Corvinus, the energies of that country, instead of being employed in persevering opposition against the Turks, were weakened by internal divisions, or altogether wasted in idle and ambitious schemes against neighbouring Christian kingdoms. Brief as was his reign, Albert the Second gave, nevertheless, the strongest proofs of his anxiety for the peace of the church and for the dignity of its head. Even from the time of their founder Rodolph, the Austrian had been distinguished above all German princes as well by their devotion to the faith and to the church, as by their chivalrous virtues. In the life of the emperor Frederick the Fourth, his long friendship for *Æneas Sylvius*, who was subsequently Pope Pius the Second, is one of its noblest traits. The labours of this pontiff, one of the most learned and intellectual men of his age, had succeeded in restoring the peace of the church, troubled chiefly by the schisms of the councils, and the fury of the *Hussites*. If all his successors in the papal chair had understood Germany and German affairs so accurately as he, this peace would have been longer preserved. The superior power of the warlike, capricious, and avaricious Matthias Corvinus, Frederick indeed was unable to withstand; but in his negotiations and political relations with Switzerland, with France, and Burgundy, he was more fortunate. In these he displayed, besides his usual sagacity, a love of peace, that was with him, not a sentiment merely, but a principle. Maximilian, too, was only drawn by others into that eddy of wars, alliances, and counter-alliances, which at that period kept half Europe in agitation. Charles the Bold's ambition and thirst of fame gave the impulse; and after his fall, the same lust of conquest seized on the French kings, especially Charles the Eighth; while Lewis the Eleventh, on the contrary, had striven to aggrandize his power only within his own dominions. When the contest regarding the inheritance of Bur-

gandy was at length terminated, this lust of conquest was directed towards Italy. Milan and Naples were the objects, and Switzerland the generally too ready instrument, of these ambitious views. The levity and anarchy of the Florentines, the selfish neutrality of Venice, and the crafty politics of all the Italians, furnished the materials of fermentation, and fed the flames of war, which devastated Italy so long, with ever fresh fuel.

The Italians had brought these evils on themselves; they had been the first to call in the French.

After their country had long been the theatre of war, whereby it had been utterly distracted, the ruling idea of the nation was expressed in one single wish, namely, the liberation of Italy from foreign yoke, or from the yoke of the barbarians, as they termed all born on this side of the Alps. This was, however, a mere negative, an utterly unattainable desire. Italy could not at that period become a single state, for which of the subsisting states, which were all of nearly equal power, could so far acquire superiority over the others, as to become the centre of the new body politic, and incorporate them with itself? For this purpose it would have been necessary that, save this one, they should all be first dissolved, and their local peculiarities at least be destroyed. Thus it was often the very parties who spoke the loudest about the unity and independence of the nation, who threw their country into anarchy, and led thereby to its subjection. The Italians of that age were indeed in general superior to any other people in politics; if we apply that term to dissimulation, or to the art of acquiring or preserving power by all possible means; but of great political ideas we find no longer any trace among them at this period. It was self-evident that northern and central Italy could only be constituted as a confederation of independent states. Now if, in order to maintain equilibrium therein, the power and protection of a third party were needed, it would have been easy for the Italians to draw a comparison between the French protectorate which they were introducing, and that supreme control of the German emperors, which was founded upon ancient law and custom. They should have contrasted the fate of the smaller provinces incorporated with the French monarchy, such as Bretagne and Provence, with the independence enjoyed by the particular states and nations in Germany

under the imperial sway. Hence those older Italian patriots of the time of Dante, who desired nothing more ardently than to see a vigorous German emperor, who should love honour and justice, and should regenerate Italy and the empire, chose a far better path than those later and false patriots of Florence, who had the liberation of Italy perpetually on their lips. Could Maximilian have fulfilled the singular wish he expressed in his later years of becoming pope, we may readily presume, that he would have succeeded in Italy as well as in Germany by establishing order and unity in a confederacy of Italian states, and perhaps making Rome the centre of such a league. He would probably have been more competent to preside over the church than Pope Julius the Second, who was as much addicted to war as he was inconstant in his alliances, and who no less contributed to introduce confusion into Italy, than to lower the authority of the ecclesiastical dignity.

In the whirlpool of these Italian wars, amid the confusion of leagues and counter-leagues quickly formed and dissolved, and wherein he was, now fairly entangled, Maximilian is best characterized by the conscientiousness with which he adhered to the alliances he had once entered into. He was alike averse to the arts of the Italian politicians, and to the levity wherewith the French kings, albeit they were not all systematically faithless like Lewis the Eleventh, so speedily forgot their promises. This conscientiousness often deprived him of the greatest advantages and success. One design he had in these Italian wars peculiar to himself, but which he was unable to realize, although the principal powers of that period cooperated with him to that end, either from not rightly comprehending or from quickly losing sight of the object: this was the destruction and partition of Venice. The high degree in which he was personally wronged by Venice can here alone justify or excuse him. The encroachments and conquests of Venice had violated or menaced the Tyrol, Italy, and the empire in its ancient rights, claims, and territorial frontiers. Here therefore, was a sufficient ground and occasion for war, and if the spirit of conquest was not here without its influence, yet this was the quarter, certainly, in which it could be exerted with the most advantage to the hereditary dominions of the house of Austria. Maximilian, however, sought not to curb Venice, but urged its destruction, and his hatred against this

state, the only one against which he evinced hatred, may perhaps have had other besides these merely personal grounds. In a complicated and agitated community of independent states, an undisguised, warlike, and passionate lust of conquest is far less dangerous and fatal to that public spirit, which alone can preserve freedom and unity, than cold selfish neutrality. Nothing is more likely to offend and exasperate a statesman, animated with love of justice and honour, and inspired by great ideas, than such calculating selfishness. Thus from his loftier point of view, Maximilian may not perhaps have been wrong in attributing the source of all the evils in Italy chiefly to Venice.

Usual as it is to censure the state-policy of Maximilian, because he did not succeed in all his objects, he yet accomplished more than the kings of France, with incomparably greater power, were able to achieve, for with all their love of conquest, the latter yet acted as if they had no plan whatever, or could not adhere to one. Fortune assisted in raising Maximilian's son, Philip the Fair, as well as his grandson Charles, to the Spanish throne. But would it not be indeed unjust to ascribe exclusively to fortune the fruit of so many toils undergone, so many obstacles overcome; when it is certain that no contemporary sovereign was so active and indefatigable in negotiations, and in the despatch of state business, nor acted upon such fixed principles, as Maximilian?

Far simpler than his share in the Italian troubles, and in the affairs of Europe in general, was his task in Germany. There too, from the badness of the constitution, and the club-law which was thereby perpetuated, he had extraordinary difficulties to contend with. His peculiar merit did not lie in the unwearied, ever-renewed efforts, that he made to maintain the public peace, and give efficiency to the laws for that object by the institution of the chamber of justice, and the division of Germany into circles. These measures had been already approved of and commenced by his predecessors, but he is to be commended for having carried them into effect with greater energy and perseverance, and on a more systematic plan. The reason, however, why tranquillity was never wholly re-established, is to be sought for in the constitution itself, in which Charles the Fourth, far from eradicating the chief political evils, had, by imparting to them the



semblance of law, only perpetuated and legalized them. Charles the Fourth, too, had promulgated laws regarding the public peace. But his views and principles were very different from those of the Austrian emperors. It is remarkable that the far more fitting measures proposed by the emperor Albert the Second, for insuring the public peace, were rejected, because they were found too favourable to the cities, a striking proof of the spirit that animated the policy of the Austrian emperors. Frederick the Fourth, it is affirmed, sought to abolish the Roman jurisprudence, a jurisprudence which had introduced so much complication into the affairs of life, and whose influence was injurious to freedom, and which had deprived us of that noble old institution, originally Germanic, but now preserved in England alone—the sessions of the peace, wherein the judges are taken from the people themselves, and the accused are tried by their peers. It is certain that it was the general principle of the Austrian emperors to uphold national rights and customs. The best illustration of Austrian principles with regard to the political constitution of Germany is to be found in the first proposal for the subdivision of the empire according to the four chief nations, the Suabians, Bavarians, Netherlanders, and Saxons. We may assume that this division into circles was not intended merely as a substitute for the old extinct duchies, but was to pave the way for their restoration. Such a restoration in regard to Suabia, Austria repeatedly endeavoured to accomplish; and here the general interest of the whole empire coincided with that of her own house. To restore these old national duchies and confederations would have been the sole means for thoroughly renovating the constitution, so that all affairs of national interest, and especially the election of the king, should be decided by the real will and power of the nation. The very reverse of all this took place in the elective constitution of Charles the Fourth, by reason of the arbitrary distribution of the right of election without any reference whatever to the chief members and great divisions of the nation, as well as by reason of the privileges conferred on the prince-electors. In a confederate state, if the prince-electors are almost wholly independent and hereditary, and the supreme head finds himself shackled by his very election, it is easy to foresee that the electors

must, by the force of things, every day, grow more powerful, because they have so many opportunities which they can take advantage of for such a purpose. The head of the state, on the other hand, becomes necessarily more and more powerless, the bonds between the head and the members are relaxed, and the whole body politic approximates ever nearer to its dissolution. This, in the case of the Germanic empire, would have ensued much earlier, if a concurrence of peculiar circumstances had not artificially so long protracted its existence. Thus Charles the Fourth's fundamental constitution of the empire was in reality a fundamental disorganization thereof. Still more injurious was the moral effect it for the most part produced upon the sentiments and modes of thinking of the German princes. By this constitution their feelings were necessarily and inevitably estranged and diverted from the empire at large, and their minds turned exclusively towards the aggrandizement of their own power; and it only too often happened, that the election of the king, which ought to have been the most momentous affair of the whole nation, was in the unworthiest manner made matter of bargain and sale between a few princes and their counsellors. Hence, likewise, that selfishness and coarse appetite for petty territorial acquisitions, joined to the utmost indifference and lukewarmness for all that concerned their fatherland and its general well-being, which became from this period apparent in the sentiments and mode of thinking of the German princes. In the pictures that are drawn of the club-law existing at that period, the blame of all the disorders then prevailing is usually cast exclusively on the nobility. These disorders were undoubtedly great, for they amounted almost to a general civil war between the powerful and arrogant cities, and an equally unbridled nobility. Under the mask, however, of mildness, and the semblance of legal forms, the degeneracy of the princes, their want of patriotism, was perhaps still greater than that of the nobles themselves. To the latter, with all their turbulence, we cannot deny, even at this epoch, the possession of noble energies and qualities, which, had they been only better regulated and more severely controlled, must have exerted an ennobling and beneficial influence upon their country. We can also trace this spirit in the autobiography of the hero, Götz von Berlichingen. The

whole club-law system and its animating sentiments are there truly enough revealed; and in his own frank avowals he presents us with a curious compound of the robber-chief, and of an enthusiastic hero devoted to his country and his duty. This warlike, club-law nobility, that now got the upper hand, was a new, and in truth a very degenerate, form of nobility, when compared with our old national and the ensuing feudal and chivalrous nobility; it was the fourth form assumed by that fundamental power of the state. The first germ of the abuse lay in the ancient right of self-defence; this degeneracy, however, and anarchy, did not become generally prevalent until the feudal ties grew relaxed and lost their force, while the spirit of chivalry, never having become universally prevalent, was not sufficiently strong to counteract the evil. There were two different means whereby this state of confusion could be put an end to: either by the establishment of absolute monarchy, or by bringing back the nobles to their true destination and to the old original principles of the Germanic constitution. The latter was the better, but likewise the more arduous course. Among a nobility like this, a very powerful emperor alone could have succeeded in establishing order, and in directing such noble energies to the well-being of the state. But it was the princes themselves who chiefly impeded such a policy, by their perpetual opposition to the imperial authority, and by the general want they evinced of all high purpose and generous sentiment, and of truly princely and patriotic views.

In its principles and modes of thinking the house of Hapsburg is clearly distinguished from the other German princely houses, and, by its more chivalrous spirit, forms an honourable exception in that age; a very powerful cause may indeed be assigned in explanation of the fact. The extraordinary and almost uninterrupted series of misfortunes that befel it in the interval between Rodolph and Maximilian may have contributed to preserve in its members a lofty tone of mind, while recollections of Rodolph's fame and the pristine glory of their house and its great destinies upheld their courage; so that even in the utmost misfortunes they never ceased to aim at the imperial dignity, and at the restoration of their ancient glory. A great aim is the best security against petty faults and petty ways of thinking.

No one was so deeply impressed as Maximilian with noble zeal for the honour of his house, as well as with the high destination of the imperial office. Himself a knight and a patriotic German, he inspired the nobility of his age with a sense of chivalry and a spirit of patriotism, and in general restored peace and order in Germany, as far as under the circumstances was at all practicable. An idea peculiar to Maximilian was the institution of the Suabian league. This German confederacy, founded in accordance with the old Germanic customs and Germanic predilection for free associations, and after the example of the Swiss and the Hanseatic league, was intended to create a national power, that might restore the constitution to its ancient force and dignity. The union of the cities, nobles, and princes might perhaps compose and heal the dissensions between the two first, which had almost grown to a general civil war, and might in general reanimate national feelings and the sentiment of German unity in the most subdivided portions of the empire. To this end, this great and powerful league much contributed; until subsequently great events and new objects carried away the spirit of the age, and a universal change ensued. That Maximilian here meditated something beyond and far greater than this, is evident from his seeking to draw the Swiss into the Suabian league, and thus make a last attempt to unite them once more closely to the empire. If in this project also he failed, he still has the merit of having sought what it was the duty of a German emperor to seek,—of having foreseen the unhappy consequences to Germany, which its separation from Switzerland involved; and if any practicable means were left to reknit the severed ties, the method he adopted was the most calculated to insure success.

The modes of thinking and the political principles of the Austrian princes may be most accurately characterized in a few words, by saying that they best upheld the constitution of the middle ages, until a new age required other maxims of government. The three universal bonds, whereby all the nations of western Europe in the middle age were or might be united into one Christian republic, were the Church, the Imperial dignity, and the institution of chivalry. In these three great moral powers lay all the substance and the whole compass of political art in the middle age. They survived the

longest in the imperial house of Austria ; while, in the other great states, the notion of all Christendom constituting a body-politic—a confederacy of Christian nations, had been already long lost ; all consideration for the general well-being of Europe had been neglected, while selfish and isolated endeavours to consolidate absolute power at home were alone apparent. In the discharge of their imperial duties, the Austrian princes proved the truth of this assertion by their devotion to the church, by their moderate policy, founded upon pacific negotiations in the affairs of Europe, and as regards Germany, by their chivalrous virtues and ceaseless efforts to restore the true old Germanic freedom and Germanic constitution.

If at that period even a Maximilian, one of the most active, energetic, and perhaps intellectual monarchs that modern history can point to, neither did nor could succeed, in wholly renovating the German constitution, he nevertheless exercised a powerful influence on the German mind, which under him, and in part by his means, received in all departments a fresh impulse. Although he did not seek, like Charles the Fourth, merely to uphold the outward semblance and dead forms of the constitution, but to maintain and restore its living force, he was nevertheless acquainted with all the new views and learning wherein his age was so fertile. Unweariedly active as a statesman, as a chivalrous warrior engaged in numberless wars and martial sports, his acquirements and productions in science and art would have yet been sufficient to procure for him an honourable place among the thinkers and artists of his time, and to have filled up the life of a laborious scholar. With the greatest scholars of his age, he was in close correspondence ; and, while he would propose to some philosophic problems for solution, he would, in conjunction with others, personally and zealously engage in historical researches. He suggested, nay even himself composed several works, and selected moreover the German language, although he was versed in all the other tongues then current in Europe, and, as a man of business, was familiar with Latin. He loved and patronized the arts of design, which in his reign flourished in Germany, especially in the person of Albert Dürer. The mechanical arts likewise and the mathematics were duly appreciated by him, and applied to the

art of war. Through his means the military skill of the Germans reached a higher degree of perfection, so that the German infantry—the Lands-knechte—was now considered equal to the Swiss; and, with respect to fortification and the use of artillery, the Germans, in the opinion of those skilled in the art, were superior to all other nations.

Together with restless activity, he was chiefly distinguished by a large comprehensiveness of mind, which embraced the most opposite objects in its grasp. For his impracticable and unexecuted projects, no one will reproach him who is acquainted with those times, and who knows how deeply his influence was nevertheless felt mediately or immediately, or how much he called forth in the spirit of the age. His faults were such as are not seldom to be found in noble-minded, and especially in very active men; he was somewhat extravagant, in anger he was violent, although his powerful mind would quickly regain moderation and self-command, and he loved enjoyment.

The character of the German nation at this time was divided into two perfectly distinct forms. The German nobility and the German cities, in intellect and refinement, were more dissimilar than two distinct nations could be from each other. Of Maximilian, we may say that he united in himself the two elements of German character and German civilization then existing. The spirit of chivalry, which although no longer gentle and tender, as it appears in earlier times and histories, yet still continued to distinguish the lawless nobles, and to adorn them with some admirable qualities, and those excellences characteristic of the civilization of cities, industry, a deep meditative spirit, which speaks to us from the buildings, the paintings, and the writings that the burgesses of that age have left us, were blended in the mind of Maximilian. Without exaggeration we may call Maximilian, in respect of his comprehensive intellectual capacity, the most complete, the most perfect German of his age.

## LECTURE XII.

## ON THE REFORMATION.

BEFORE attempting to draw a picture of the age of the Reformation and of Charles the Fifth, this appears to me the best opportunity for stating at full the object which I have had in view in the composition of these lectures. The age we live in, will appear, even to the remotest centuries, one of the most remarkable and extraordinary that the history of the world can show. Who would not gladly gain a clear insight into the inward connection and hidden reasons of such extraordinary phenomena? Who would not gladly learn to divine the course which the human mind may take and will take amid this universal concussion of all things? Who can wholly withdraw his mind from these lofty contemplations; can sever and keep himself independent of his age? Whom does it not seize upon more or less forcibly, and hurry irresistibly into the vortex of its movements?

Various attempts have been made to delineate this age, so fertile in great political changes, and in still more important intellectual revolutions, to explain and comprehend its various movements. Such an end also I have proposed to myself in the present lectures.

That no real history of our own times can be written, but at most, only preparatory materials for such can be arranged, is quite clear; for no history of events, which are still incomplete, which are yet too proximate to our view, and in which we are still taking part, is possible. Some intellectual writers have attempted to characterize the social life of our age, by portraying the individual traits that distinguish it. Many of these traits, indeed, are found to be correctly drawn; many of the remarks are considered acute; while others appear doubtful and vague, or may be even judged incorrect; but even if each observation taken singly be correct, yet in the end we have but isolated views, while the leading idea—the connection and spirit of the whole, is wanting; which, nevertheless, is precisely what we seek for. On the other hand, many perspicacious thinkers have endeavoured to explain and characterize the spirit of the age, by propounding

a general theory of the inevitable march of intellect and of man, and by assigning the place which the present age will take in this progress, in this series of centuries and cycles. But even if such a theory could lay claim to general acceptance, which is far from being the case, it would still ever remain a mere undefined outline, an empty idea. When we hear from a philosopher of this stamp that our age hovers on the limits between extreme degeneracy and 'the much-hoped-for regeneration and reform, such a remark is far from sufficient, I will not say fully to solve the problem of the mighty destinies and providential events, whereof we are eye-witnesses, but even to enable us to appreciate the true causes and moral character of all these destructive movements and revolutions, in which we participate. The historical appears to me the safest path for finding that correct appreciation of the age, which is so anxiously sought for by all. Since similar epochs of great and general convulsion have occurred before now in the course of modern history, he who has a vivid perception of the age of the great northern migrations, of the age of the Crusades, and that of the Reformation, who has maturely reflected upon the course, the consequences, and the characteristic differences of these epochs, will surely be best on his guard against any illusions consequent on the startling events of our times, and best enabled to form a clear, well-grounded judgment upon them. In this respect, however, I believe that a new delineation of well-known facts, directed entirely to this object, will be worthy of attention, only if I succeed in describing and illustrating those three great epochs of universal convulsion.

The historical explication of our own age by the study of the past will be, however, fruitless, if we confine ourselves to details only; if, for instance, we seek more isolated parallels, which after all will be merely amusing, never exactly correct, nor truly illustrative. The result will be the same, if from the endless mass of facts in universal history, we seek out matter wherewithal to compare, and to justify, or excuse the events of contemporary history; for it would be easy to find in this way some similar case, some apparently justifying fact, for everything, however revolting to the feelings, however shocking to the reason; and so in this manner the words of the Preacher would be verified, "that there is



nothing new under the sun." If we do not look to mere details, but to the general spirit and connection of history, there is, undoubtedly, no better antidote to the errors of our own age, than the recollections of the mighty past. For this reason I thought myself obliged, in addition to the three great epochs of universal convulsion—the epoch of the Germanic migrations, of the Crusades, and of the Reformation, to add as vigorous a picture as was in my power of the primitive German people; to portray as well their earliest condition, when they were still living in the primeval freedom of their forests, as the full maturity of their civilization in the middle age. This required us especially to survey and illustrate the great political powers and forms which prevailed in the middle age; the relations and bonds of union between the church and the old imperial power, in Germany, Italy, and Europe; and, finally, the spirit of chivalry. This was the more needful, because the chief question, even of our own times, the grand question of our social constitution, turns upon the possibility of preserving what is essentially good and beneficial in our ancient constitution, in the new social relations that have sprung up throughout the world; upon the best, most fitting, and safest combination of ancient rights, with all that the circumstances of modern life imperiously require.

This leads us to reflect upon the chief fundamental power of civil life and the constitution of society. History and theory coincide in representing the nobility as this fundamental power of the state, as all other orders have been formed and moulded in and by the nobility. If this be so, it will be the simpler and safer course to explain in what nobility essentially consists; what its mission requires it to be, by a mere comparison of facts, by a narrative of what it originally was, and what in the course of time it became, at first by its noble development and glorification through the laws and high obligations of chivalry, and afterwards in its degeneracy and barbarism through club-law and unbridled love of war. Such a course is far preferable to any of those uncertain theories about the state, the constitution, and legislation, of which our times have seen so many arise and disappear. Of all earlier ages of universal commotion, not one approximates so closely to the present as the age of the

Reformation. If, in the age of the migration of the northern nations, and in that of the crusades, the universal movement was rather produced by a fresh spring of the imagination, in that of the Reformation, precisely as in our own, it was the understanding, it was thought, that then asserted its supremacy, and proved itself a power either of preservation or destruction. That thought—that god within us—when turned to things divine, should be able to exert so powerful a sway over the world and over time, is in itself something calculated to exalt the dignity of man. How terrific its power and its action may become, if passion and self-love govern its energies, that age as well as our own offers striking instructive examples. Hence a careful examination of Reformation, and especially of its internal causes, will find a fitting place in this series of reflections upon modern history, and constitute a necessary, perhaps even the most important part thereof. The causes wherein originated the Lutheran troubles, and whereby they attained such rapid diffusion and such permanent duration, and, in fine, the reasons instead of a reformation of the whole church, a mere *reformation* was the result, these will be set forth in the clearest light, a characteristic description of the following four great extraordinary Germans.

Reuchlin, Ulric von Hutten, Luther, and Melancthon were each of them scholars, although the first filled several considerable offices of state, and the second was a soldier and a knight. As scholars they exerted, by their writings and their eloquence, an influence upon their age and upon the world, such as few rulers and princes of that or any other period have exercised. The two former, Reuchlin and Hutten, as they only prepared the way for and sympathized in the movement, occupy a less prominent place in history, yet was their influence not really the less on that account. Reuchlin was a man of whom it may be said, that if his had been the predominant spirit, if so rare and profound a spirit could have become universal, a reformation in the higher sense of the word, a philosophic illustration and restoration of Christianity, obscured by scholastic disputes, would indeed have been effected; but that never would Protestantism, never would a schism in the church have been introduced. The characters of Ulric von Hutten and Luther account for

the rise of the schism, and for that spirit of violence, hostile to all reconciliation, which the Reformation assumed from the very outset. Had it been still possible to restore the troubled peace after the rupture had already existed for an entire generation, that work, so earnestly desired by the great emperor Charles the Fifth, would have been more readily accomplished through the mild Melancthon, and other like-minded men, than by any other Protestants. In subsequent times the prevalent modes of thinking were much changed, the spirit of the Protestants became very different. Rightly to understand, however, the moral philosophic causes of that great event, so fertile in results, we must wholly transplant ourselves into that first period, must contemplate the Reformation exactly as it was in its origin.

Reuchlin, one of the first scholars that Germany ever produced, and as much at home in Italy as in his native country, united all the literary culture, all the knowledge and learning, which either country at the end of the fifteenth century could supply. Not content with being the powerful critic and restorer of the then reviving Greek literature, he was at the same time, for all Europe, the founder and creator of oriental studies. Unlike later scholars and men of letters, however, these studies were not with him a mere matter of philology, of historical compilation, or of rhetorical brilliancy, he directed all his researches to the highest object of knowledge, that which the inquiring mind must ever consider its principal concern, namely, the knowledge of man, of nature, and of God.

He was beyond comparison the profoundest philosopher of his age ; in the rare combination of depth with perspicuity he surpasses even Leibnitz. With respect to the fulness and scope of his learning, no one at that day could be compared with him, except perhaps one Italian youth, Prince Pius di Mirandola, the wonder of his contemporaries. The latter, however, was snatched away by a premature death, and never attained so much lucidity of thought as Reuchlin. With the external world, with life and affairs of state, Reuchlin was necessarily familiar, as a man standing in closest connection with most of the learned and with many highly educated princes and nobles of his time, both in Italy and Germany. His predilection for oriental languages and oriental philosophy rendered

him an object of dislike and suspicion to some of the more narrow-minded ecclesiastics and theologians of his time. The dispute was animated, and was even carried to Rome; but in Rome the decision was favourable to Reuchlin and to the good cause. Rome was at that time more than ever the seat of learning, of the arts, and of true intellectual culture; and shortly before the breaking out of the Reformation, an independence of thought prevailed there, that must almost astonish us at the present day. Yet it was not the case, as is often represented, that in Rome free-thinking and religious indifference prevailed all the more generally in secret, because they were not publicly professed, and had made men tolerant and indulgent in matters of faith, if they did not affect the constitution of the church. This mode of thinking may indeed here and there have manifested itself in Italy, but among the leading men, the better and worthier class of literati, these liberal views sprang from a thorough and profound knowledge of philosophy, as well as of religion and art, and from a conviction of their mutual harmony. Reuchlin's philosophy far surpasses the measure and the limits of common-place ability and common-place views. Isolated portions of it may have certainly appeared dangerous to the more narrow-minded; but the entire system is not inconsistent with the Christian faith. It is, however, very remote from the views and doctrines of the Protestants; on the contrary, it serves as the best proof, that in his peculiar opinions Reuchlin by no means belonged to the Protestant party. It was solely because the controversy regarding oriental languages and philosophy was drawn into the vortex of the Protestant movement, that Reuchlin too was afterwards considered one of the founders and originators of the Reformation, which he undoubtedly, without desiring or foreseeing it, helped to bring about.

Historical accounts of the Reformation usually deduce its origin from the sale of indulgences, and the collections of money made in Germany for Rome, and which were piously intended to complete the noble church of St. Peter's. To derive its origin, however, from this or any individual abuse whatever, were simply to stop short at the first outward occasion of this revolution; an abuse that could have been easily removed without producing such vast consequences, without bringing about an event and a commotion, which even without

this accidental occasion would a little sooner or later have still ensued. Far deeper than in this accidental occasion is the real cause of the Reformation to be sought for, and it existed long before this final outbreak occurred. It lay in the then prevailing philosophy, or rather in the neglect and degeneracy thereof; in philosophy, that is, in the scientific foundation of all higher instruction, and in the inward spirit of public opinion. At that period, more than ever, was philosophy the basis of all higher education, and in all times has it been the inward spirit and the chief moving agent of public opinion, and of the prevailing modes of thinking. „In the invisible domain of philosophy, in the mind of the original thinkers of every age, those revolutions are ever first wrought; those modes of thinking have sprung up, which, after they have become for one or more generations generally prevalent, mould public opinion, and produce effects in the external world that are often only too vast and too visible. One would think indeed that philosophy needed not, like other sciences, to grow and enlarge with time, that in general it was not susceptible of change; since the only question then at issue is as to the knowledge of the Eternal, which in the sense of our own imperfection we call God, in respect to our moral destinies, virtue and justice, in reference to our hopes, the immortality of the soul. For knowledge like this may be indeed expressed with infinite variety, but is not capable of any addition. The great progress and the discoveries, of which philosophy from time to time boasts, are only discoveries which have already been made by others also hundreds and thousands of years before, in other forms, however, and in other language. The manner, however, in which this knowledge is expressed, unfolded, and communicated, is of the utmost importance in respect to general opinion, which sooner or later is ever regulated by philosophy. Still more is this the case, if the national mind takes a destructive course, and sets itself in opposition to that knowledge which can alone give moral unity and stability to man and to life; or when the opportunity has been neglected for setting aside the noxious influence of those destructive opinions, while there is yet time. Whenever a state or a creed stands in open or secret opposition to the prevailing philosophy, we may be sure that they will be gradually undermined, and will succumb to violent revolutions.

From the earliest times, from her very origin, was Christianity intimately allied even by some of her very first teachers with philosophy—a certain proof that this alliance was not accidental, but essential to Christianity. Even her primitive apologists completed the victory over the belief and the principles of heathenism chiefly by the superiority of the Christian philosophy over the stoic-platonic. How injurious then to religion itself must have been that decay and degeneracy of philosophy, which, originating in several unfavourable circumstances, sank to so low an ebb in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. These circumstances were the party spirit, that was so easily kindled and nourished in great and free universities; the discord and the jealousy of the different learned orders, to whose hands science and education were principally intrusted. The newly-adopted Roman jurisprudence also had fostered this philosophic contentiousness. Thus in all European universities the prevailing philosophy had degenerated into a passionate party spirit, a dialectic wrangling, and empty formalism. The better and higher philosophy of some individual and original thinkers, several of whom Germany successively produced, from Albertus Magnus to Reuchlin, could not penetrate into the general modes of thinking, nor attain any wide dissemination, because the existing system was already dominant. Neither was there wanting the permanent secret opposition of a false philosophy alien to God, and whereof the spirit was undoubtedly opposed to Christianity. Whenever the true philosophy is neglected, a false one will inevitably take its place. More especially after intercourse was opened with the East, had infidelity and fanaticism never ceased to spread, although secretly and under various forms. Shortly before the Reformation a propensity to astrological superstitions and to magical arts was very apparent; in these, some physical knowledge not generally known, and joined to much deliberate deception, exercised an equally injurious influence upon the public mind and morals. A philosophic adventurer of this kind peculiarly distinguished by his intellectual powers, and who, under the name of Dr. Faustus, has become the subject of a popular legend, stood in close connection with many influential men of the time. He resided in the castle of Francis von Sickingen, and exercised a great and corrupting influence upon the public mind. The first great attempt like-

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From the earliest times, from her very origin, was Christianity intimately allied even by some of her very first teachers with philosophy—a certain proof that this alliance was not accidental, but essential to Christianity. Even her primitive apologists completed the victory over the belief and the principles of heathenism chiefly by the superiority of the Christian philosophy over the stoic-platonic. How injurious then to religion itself must have been that decay and degeneracy of philosophy, which, originating in several unfavourable circumstances, sank to so low an ebb in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. These circumstances were the party spirit, that was so easily kindled and nourished in great and free universities; the discord and the jealousy of the different learned orders, to whose hands science and education were principally intrusted. The newly-adopted Roman jurisprudence also had fostered this philosophic contentiousness. Thus in all European universities the prevailing philosophy had degenerated into a passionate party spirit, a dialectic wrangling, and empty formalism. The better and higher philosophy of some individual and original thinkers, several of whom Germany successively produced, from Albertus Magnus to Reuchlin, could not penetrate into the general modes of thinking, nor attain any wide dissemination, because the existing system was already dominant. Neither was there wanting the permanent secret opposition of a false philosophy alien to God, and whereof the spirit was undoubtedly opposed to Christianity. Whenever the true philosophy is neglected, a false one will inevitably take its place. More especially after intercourse was opened with the East, had infidelity and fanaticism never ceased to spread, although secretly and under various forms. Shortly before the Reformation a propensity to astrological superstitions and to magical arts was very apparent; in these, some physical knowledge not generally known, and joined to much deliberate deception, exercised an equally injurious influence upon the public mind and morals. A philosophic adventurer of this kind peculiarly distinguished by his intellectual powers, and who, under the name of Dr. Faustus, has become the subject of a popular legend, stood in close connection with many influential men of the time. He resided in the castle of Francis von Sickingen, and exercised a great and corrupting influence upon the public mind. The first great attempt like-



wise at a total revolution in the church, that of Arnold of Brescia, was entirely the result of a fanatical system of philosophy. The various heresies and innovations of the following centuries prior to the Reformation, all had their origin in philosophy; and even Luther himself was animated far less by the idea of abolishing a few abuses, than by his own peculiar views of faith, which he would not abandon, and which he ardently sought to enforce.

As Reuchlin's genius and influence may serve to point out the more general and deeper causes of the Reformation; so does a character, like Ulric von Hutten's, on the other hand, account for its rapid diffusion, and the political importance it acquired from the very beginning. Soldier and scholar at once, he possessed an irresistible and impassioned eloquence, which as an enthusiastic patriot he often directed, not only against the monks, but also against the Turks, the French, or other favourite objects of the kind. Stronger, however, even than the impression made by his eloquence, was that of his caustic wit and the social talent, which enabled him to form connections with all the most refined and important personages in Germany. His knowledge, like his talents, was of that light, agreeable kind, which has so much more general an influence than that of a severe scientific stamp. In proportion as the prevailing philosophy betrayed its weak points, did the admirers of classical literature, upon the revival whereof this class had arisen, abandon themselves wholly to their favourite study. Among the majority of them, Humanists, as they were called, there was a decided distaste for and repugnance to all severer science, a certain frivolous free-thinking, aiming merely at outward grace, that was the more dangerous, as the influence of this class of men was so extensive, at a time when Latin was the language of conversation, as well as of business. An epigram of Hutten's would, in a short space of time, be circulated and read in all the capitals of Europe. A somewhat adventurous course of life had led him hither and thither over half of Europe, and had served only to stimulate still further his unquiet restless spirit; while his courage was prepared to engage in any enterprise however hazardous. An accomplished knight, he had once in combat with four Frenchmen, who had spoken disrespectfully of the emperor, defeated them single-

handed; a feat which Maximilian rewarded with high marks of honour. His pen was still sharper and more daring than his sword. When Duke Ulric of Würtemberg killed his cousin John von Hutten, his revenge contrived to set every engine in motion against that powerful foe. This deed of violence originated in jealousy of his own wife, by birth a Bavarian princess, or more probably in an intrigue with the wife of the youthful Hutten; the duke urged in his excuse, that as a judge of the *Vehm-gericht*, as one of the heads of the Secret or Black Tribunal, he had been competent to exercise this act. It may serve to give us a picture of the political anarchy of those times, that a secret society, which had had the audacity, it is true, to summon even an emperor before its judgment-seat, and in which the initiated, as they called themselves, treated all the uninitiated as mere insignificant non-entities, could have been publicly named in connection with such deeds. We see, moreover, that this remarkable secret league, which may probably have been connected with older societies of the like kind, strikingly favoured the nobility in their disputes with the other orders at this time. Ulric von Hutten was one of those dangerous characters, that generally arise in times of great political ferment, and when a mighty revolution is impending over a nation. He was born to be a popular leader, and with all his restless activity, was indeed the man to set half the world in uproar. At that time everything in Germany appeared ripe for a great political revolution, whereof the repeated risings of the peasantry, the condition of Suabia and Lower Saxony, wherein the great feuds had well nigh broken out into an open civil war, fomented, as they were, secretly by France: the fearful peasants' war, the enterprises of Francis von Sickingen, and subsequently the commotions of the Anabaptists under John of Leyden, are to be considered merely as individual phenomena. The cause of a revolution like this lay in the gross moral corruption of some classes, while at the same time the intellectual and physical energies of the nation were unweakened; in the ferment of opinions, in the prevailing spirit of faction, but, above all, in the internal relations, political and social, of the country. The nobility, although still ever ready to renew their ancient feuds with the wealthy cities, might well feel, that the princes were the

real enemies of their independence and power. While the latter were not without anxiety on account of the great power of the new emperor out of Germany, the nobility, on the other hand, as well as the nation in general, were wholly devoted to the emperor. Had perchance an ambitious emperor cherished the projects which Charles the Fifth was accused of with respect to Germany, he need but have placed himself at the head of this nobility, to have responded but a little to the general wishes, in order fully to attain his object, and to become an absolute sovereign. Expectations of this kind are betrayed not only by the enterprises of Francis von Sickingen, undertaken at first against an ecclesiastical prince, who was known to favour the French, but also by many other occurrences of the time. How much Luther relied upon the nobility, and regarded it as the true strength, and very kernel of the nation; by what views and expectations, irrespective of their convictions, the new doctrines were calculated to flatter, to win, and to carry away the nobles; all this is clearly seen in Luther's remarkable work addressed to the German nobility; a work which is one of the most important documents for the history of that period, as well as of the internal condition of Germany. It was in their political bearings that Hutten regarded Luther's new doctrines and the religious controversies of the time; for of Hutten's philosophy, or the sentiments of his heart in matters of faith, his morals, manners, and writings, give us by no means the most favourable opinion. He saw in Luther's enterprise the germ of a German revolution; and when discord was once enkindled, he employed himself unweariedly, and with all his might, in feeding the fire, and blowing it into open flames. The admirable art of printing, conformably to its true mission, had been at first applied both in Italy and Germany with honourable rivalry for multiplying the noblest remains of antiquity and of the middle age, the writings of the ancients, and also the great and favourite poems composed in the vernacular tongue. Now, however, this art put into men's hands a dangerous instrument, whereby thousands of pamphlets might be rapidly scattered among the people. In the peasants' war the ferment broke out precisely in the opposite quarter to what had been at first expected, but this ought not to surprise us. When the energy of the masses

is once let loose, when the flames of popular passion are once enkindled, they take their own destructive course, and seldom obey the guiding hand that gave them their first impulse.

That the Reformation did not at its very commencement become a revolution of this kind, we are chiefly indebted to Luther. He it was who thus gave permanency to the Reformation, while Ulric von Hutten, and men like him, effected its rapid diffusion. Had not Luther opposed with all his power the dangerous errors into which some of his adherents at the very first fell; had these fanatical doctrines of universal equality, and of the abolition of all temporal authority as a thing superfluous in the new state of things, obtained the upper hand; had the so-called Reformation of faith and of the church become wholly and entirely a political and national revolution; in that case, the first shock of civil war would have been incontestably more terrific and more universal; but it would probably, when the storm had blown over, have subsided of itself, and a return to the old order of things would have ensued. The princes in particular were indebted to Luther for having contributed so vigorously to stifle the flames of rebellion; and he must thereby have gained consideration even among those who disapproved of his doctrines and proceedings. His personal character in general was excellently adapted to consolidate and perpetuate his party. The great energy, which gave him such decided preponderance over all who co-operated with him, preserved as much unity as was at all possible in such a state of moral ferment. With whatever passionate violence Luther may have expressed himself, he nevertheless, in his principles and modes of thinking, preserved in many points the precise medium that was necessary to keep his party together as a distinct party. Had he at the first beginning gone further, had he sanctioned the fanaticism adverted to above, the whole affair would then have fallen sooner to the ground. The very circumstance, that he did not at first secede from the ancient faith more than he did, procured him so many and such important adherents, and gave such strength to his party. He was undeniably gifted with great qualities; and all the defects we are obliged to lay to his charge may be comprised in the single reproach, that he was possessed with an utterly

unbending self-will and arrogance. Of this even his most faithful followers and friends often bitterly complained. To this one quality of obstinate arrogance everything that by its passionate violence, or otherwise, appears censurable in his writings, may be traced, and even everything in his peculiar views of faith that is repugnant to the mild and loving spirit of Christianity. Whoever would restore the original pure form of Christianity must act in its own mild and loving spirit. Thus did Borromeo and St. Theresa, with all their strictness, yet still full of love, really reform the church. Luther's violence, however, was not only without restraint towards his enemies, but even towards his friends and co-religionists, if they did not think exactly like himself. The expressions he permitted himself to use against King Henry the Eighth appear incredible in our age. His vehemence against the Calvinists and against other disciples, who separated from him, and whom he seemed to regard as rebellious deserters, exceeded in passionate expression all that he was wont to manifest against the antichrist in Rome, as he was in the habit of calling the pope. Even to effect the removal of abuses and the reform of the ecclesiastical constitution, this stormy violence was by no means the best course, because, from the close connection of church and state, all proceedings ought to have been conducted with extreme forbearance, or the greatest discord would necessarily ensue. Least of all, through means so violent could the seat of the disorder be removed—could a true reform of philosophy be achieved; that is to say, not only the old philosophy be set aside, but a better substituted in its place, by a man who could style the great teacher of Alexander as nothing but a damned, rascally, dead heathen.

Luther's eloquence made him a man of the people; his principles, however, despite his passionate expression of them, remained nevertheless in essentials, both with regard to political subjects and to matters of faith, within certain limits; and joined to that circumstance, the very obstinacy which his friends complained of consolidated and united the new party, and gave it permanent strength.

If the personal character of Luther thus essentially contributed to consolidate and give permanency to the new party as a distinct party, that of Melancthon, who, after Luther,

was honoured as the head of the Protestants, appeared excellently adapted to prevent a total schism (if there was still any possibility of doing so), and to restore the troubled unity or Christian Europe. It was the hope of numberless well-meaning men, as well as of the greatest statesmen, who were solicitous for the public welfare, that this undoubtedly arduous attempt could be accomplished by Melancthon, so calm an inquirer, and such a gentle-minded man, whom even his fellow-religionists often reproached with too great pliancy. To this attempt for restoring unity once more, and for effecting a reform instead of a schism in the church, the emperor Charles the Fifth, in the latter half of his life, devoted his whole undivided energies; and in this he was responded to on the other side by the most respected individual among the Protestants. Was this attempt necessarily idle? Was the schism really inevitable? In cases like these we generally decide according to the result; but this is unreasonable. In and by itself the schism was not inevitable, a reunion was still possible. Luther's peculiar doctrine of the non-freedom of the will was in part abandoned by his successors, in part so essentially changed, that on this cardinal point an agreement was often nearly effected. The innovations in regard to the religious rites connected with the sacred mysteries of Christianity were undoubtedly of great importance; for by the abolition or alteration of these, the custom of the ancient worship was interrupted. But as the matter most essential—the recognition of the mystery itself—was admitted by the Protestants (with the exception of the Zwinglian party), a reconciliation might have been possible on this point likewise. Other external differences had neither appeared an obstacle to the reunion of the Greek and Roman churches, nor rendered the restoration of peace impossible after the Hussite troubles. Upon ecclesiastical property, and the relations of the church to the state and the constitution, an understanding might easily have been come to, if peace had been generally desired; for these mere externals of the church affected not the essence of the faith. That Adrian the Sixth was snatched so early from the world; that the emperor and the ecclesiastical power did not act always in concert; that Melancthon's sentiments, moreover, were not those predominant among the Protestants; that the attempt at conciliation was in the first instance frus-

trated by political circumstances, and afterwards was made too late, when the schism had already attained a sort of prescription, and become habitual; all this, together with accidental circumstances, gave to the Reformation that precise issue which it actually had, and which at the outset was very far from being foreseen. It may, indeed, be true that in a higher sense nothing in the world's history is accidental; that everything we term chance, as it is passing before our eyes, is in a more comprehensive and loftier view to be regarded as a mysterious providence; and thus we shall readily and thankfully acknowledge, that the Reformation also has subsequently had beneficial effects on the development of the human mind. Had the Reformation not produced such effects—had it not been designed to produce them, never would it have happened. But blame not therefore the great emperor, who lavished so many efforts and well-nigh half his life upon that work of peace; for those subsequent beneficial results that now reconcile us to the passing anarchy, and to the schism itself, were then still veiled in the darkness of the future. But what every one endowed with Charles's political and worldly knowledge foresaw with certainty, and could, without the gift of prophecy, foresee, was what actually ensued, namely, that Europe, for a century at least, if not longer, would be torn to pieces by bloody civil wars. Never may man anticipate Providence; else were an apology ready at hand for every one who, from weakness or ambition, follows the stream of corruption. Man must hearken only to the voice of honour, of justice, and of love, and hence will generally feel that he is summoned to wage an endless warfare against evil. Whatever good may arise one day through God's will out of evil, man must leave to God and to the future.

All that Charles foresaw and that weighed upon his soul was now finally ordained; the total schism had been already long consummated in men's minds before it was judicially pronounced for the outward world also by the Council of Trent. If the teaching of this synod in opposition to the doctrines could be nought else than a confirmation of the ancient faith; if more was effected at Trent for the reform of ecclesiastical discipline and for the removal of individual abuses and failings, than could have been well expected under

circumstances so difficult; yet the real root of the evil was not removed, and indeed could scarcely be removed by an ecclesiastical council. The concord between philosophy and the Christian faith, which had been interrupted, was not re-established; even the organization of scientific institutions, and the constitution of the universities and ecclesiastical corporations, to whose hands the higher scientific education was intrusted, were not radically reformed; the germ of the evil was left intact. The abuse of philosophy and freedom of thought, which had produced so much intellectual discord and such unhappy consequences, now led to the opposite evil—to the shackling and the suppression of philosophical inquiry. The mere suppression of a false philosophy, of the abuse of freedom of thought, where the evil is not plucked up by the roots, where something better is not substituted in its place, will ever produce a still more fatal and dangerous reaction. This reaction, accordingly, has universally ensued, and has stretched its wide-spread influence even over the revolutions of our own days.

## LECTURES XIII. & XIV.

### HISTORY OF THE EMPEROR CHARLES THE FIFTH.

To be misunderstood is the ordinary lot of true greatness. Extraordinary energy and activity, directed towards the furtherance of mere vulgar, grasping, and selfish views, are indeed easily apprehended and universally admired. Cæsar finds more admirers among the multitude than Alexander, because the former was coldly calculating and the latter enthusiastic. This misunderstanding, however, still more frequently occurs when extraordinary energies and activity are inspired exclusively by great ideas, and, in order to carry them out, strive oftener to battle with the world than to make use of it; when the deep sense of the magnitude of the objects sought after produces a certain inequality in outward acts.

Hence the many contradictory, unfavourable opinions, or such at least as are far beneath the true dignity and greatness of



the mighty emperor Charles the Fifth. The calumnies of hatred and prejudice have obtained such currency, even up to our own times, only because all men have not sense and feeling for the ideas and actions of a spirit so far exalted above the ordinary standard. To judge, moreover, correctly the workings of his mind requires a minute and comprehensive knowledge of his age, because he took part in and was mixed up with all its great events and occurrences; an age, too, that was one of the most complicated and eventful in the annals of mankind.

Fortune had lavished favours upon Charles even before he was of sufficient age to act for himself; either absolutely, or in almost sure expectancy, she had accumulated upon his brow the noblest crowns of Europe, in order to form the matchless heritage. In the destinies, however, that encompassed his boyhood and youth, there was also much that was sorrowful, much that threatened danger. His father, Philip the Fair, a chivalrous, noble-minded, well-meaning prince, but passionate and wholly devoted to pleasure, who, after a short enjoyment of his beautiful kingdom, was snatched by a premature death from the hopes and the love of his faithful Castilians, committed Charles, still a child, to the guardianship of strangers. Both the grandfathers of the latter, Maximilian and Ferdinand the Catholic of Arragon, lived for the most part estranged from each other. Love and jealousy had thrown his grandmother Joanna into a state of melancholy, which, on the death of her husband, terminated in a silent imbecility, that rendered her indifferent and insensible to everything save anxiety and tenderness for the dead body of her husband, which she carried about with her in the bier and watched over with jealous care. The younger brother of Charles was educated abroad in Spain, and by the first capricious disposition of his grandfather, as well as by the love of some Spanish grandees, had been destined to inherit the Spanish throne. This circumstance must have converted into anxious and distrustful reserve the brotherly of the youthful Charles towards that very Ferdinand, afterwards in all state affairs and perils ever proved his most faithful friend. Even his two tutors—the learned Adrian, who was afterwards pope, and Chièvres, a Flemish statesman, the former of whom initiated Charles into

the world of knowledge, and the latter into the world of business—were by no means in unison, and from their very opposite sentiments exerted the most diverse influence upon his youthful mind. All these circumstances necessarily tended to mould his character, so that he, whose nature was like his father, predisposed to all knightly exercises and martial sports, was nevertheless nearly distinguished by his rare prudence and thoughtful gravity. The portrait of him, when only fifteen years of age, taken by a great German artist, bears this expression of thoughtfulness, feeling, and circumspection. As Charles's likeness was taken by a master-hand at almost every stage of his life, it is interesting to observe the transition in these different portraits, to see how upon that regularly formed and beautiful face the world gradually ploughed deeper and deeper the furrows of thought and sorrow.

How great were the causes for anxiety and for vigilant attention to himself, his own position, and the state of the world, which Charles had to encounter on his arrival in Spain! That kingdom even then contained all that smouldering mass which so soon broke out into a terrible conflagration. A powerful nobility, but recently familiarized with a firm exertion of the royal power, a free constitution, rich and haughty cities, parties of various kinds irritated and inflamed by Ferdinand's severity, even by Ximenes' well-intended partiality towards the cities, by his wholesome but still novel enforcement of the law, and by Ferdinand the Catholic's estrangement from Philip and Maximilian. There was, moreover, a favourable opportunity for each party to set up with some colour of right, a government opposed to that of the young king, either in the person of his younger-brother Ferdinand (who in an earlier testament of his grandfather had been constituted heir), or in the name of the queen-mother, Joanna, as her incompetency to reign, despite her state of melancholy, did not seem yet to have been legally proved and certified. Among other things, Charles has been severely reproached with ingratitude towards Ximenes. This charge might be admitted if the circumstances had occurred some years later; but we must in fairness judge by a different standard the actions of a youth of seventeen, who had just taken possession of a foreign kingdom in a situation of such

extraordinary difficulty. Those who surrounded Charles may have been much interested in preventing an interview between him and Ximenes. Who could tell what impression a single conversation with the high-minded and aged statesman might have made upon his youthful soul; how much those who had possessed chief influence and authority with him from his boyhood up might have thereby lost? The same remark applies to the abuse, which the Flemings may at first have made of their influence in a wealthy and foreign country like Spain. Early, too, as Charles attended to affairs himself, much as he subsequently looked into everything himself, judged and decided for himself, it was nevertheless characteristic of him to learn by degrees only to act alone and to follow his own judgment. He was equally a stranger to the desperate wilfulness of those youthful princes, who, on early attaining sovereignty, first learn the extent of their own powers by abusing them, and the weakness of those who readily surrender themselves and their kingdoms to the guidance of others. *Nondum* was his noble motto, when in the tournament at Valladolid, he astonished all the spectators by his dexterity and skill in knightly sports; he felt equally conscious of the eminence he might attain, and of his not having yet attained it. Studious, laborious, thoughtful had he been from his youth up, but it needed time to give him confidence in his own judgment, and to render him independent.

The first act we can regard as his own, as the commencement of his history and his reign, is the resolution he took to quit Spain in order personally to assume the imperial dignity tendered to him in Germany. He carried out this resolution against the advice and warning of many of his most faithful councillors. It was plain that the political ferment in Spain would come to an outbreak; but Germany likewise had need of him, and summoned him impatiently. For centuries no election had been so great and important, none recognised by all Europe as pregnant with such mighty consequences. Charles had borne off the victory from the powerful king Francis the First, so illustrious for his martial fame. If the newly-elected emperor came quickly to fill the office conferred upon him, it might become once more in his hands what it formerly had been, namely, the highest charge and dignity in

in Christendom. But if he delayed, if the hopes which had been placed in him once vanished, the opportunity would never return, the imperial crown would at a blow lose all power and importance. Charles was summoned into the lists of fame; he followed the summons undismayed, regardless of the dangers that were lowering around him. He left Spain in a state of agitation, where the political storm had well nigh already broken out; in Germany the great contest of the age awaited his decision,—a contest on which, in anxious expectation, the eyes of all nations, of the whole contemporary world, were fixed, and which to this day often arrests the attention of posterity. At the very time he left Spain, and entered upon a new and vaster theatre, the intelligence reached him that Mexico, a new and vast empire in another hemisphere, had been conquered in his name. Impressions like these it was that speedily ripened the youth of twenty years into the man, that moulded the sovereign, that developed in him the strength to embrace a world within the scope of his understanding and of his care, and in his heart the strength to resist, in tranquil composure, the pressure from the world without. From this time forth, as well in his public, historical career, as in the more private memorials of his industry, we may remark the stirring energy and the clearness of intellect wherewith he unweariedly transacted all the affairs of an empire, that comprehended so many nations, and such various objects, down to the moment when, weary of the world, and bowed down by sickness and by sorrow, he withdrew into a holy solitude.

Such was the entrance of Charles upon the world of political affairs. We shall now proceed to examine the period of his reign, his struggles with the world, the ideas that guided, the qualities that distinguished him, the projects, the enemies, the friends and servants, that he had. We shall briefly touch upon the most important occurrences of his reign, until, tired of the protracted struggle, he took leave of the world in a manner as conformable with his inmost feelings as it was worthy of his character.

With the first great transaction in his reign, the Diet of Worms, his warfare against the world and against his age began. No idea seems then to have inspired him so much as that of restoring, like his ancestor Maximilian, with all mili-

stride for domestic peace, the pristine lustre of the imperial dignity. The strife of opinions and of creeds, however, already well nigh amounted to civil war, and challenged his whole attention. He lent a willing ear to the investigation of the new doctrines, as long as he believed that the question regarded a reform of the church (such as all well-meaning men desired), and a restoration of the purer spirit of Christianity. But he no sooner saw that a total change of the ancient eternal faith was looked for, that the unity of the church was menaced, than he formed an irrevocable resolution, and then ensued the outlawry of Luther. As the decree could not be fully executed, it was regarded as the certain signal of many bloody wars. They would not the less have ensued, if the emperor had wavered in his policy. What herein alone is censurable is, that Luther was allowed to appear at all at the diet; that a controversy of faith was converted into a national affair; for thereby did the agitation reach a pitch so dangerous. This, however, it was no longer possible to alter; the steps taken could not now be retraced, it was too late; the princes desired the measure, yea, the whole nation demanded it, and had already long considered and wished to treat the subject as a general national affair. It was an inevitable evil. Charles was resolved to defend the ancient faith and the ancient constitution; but no passionate zeal ever transported him beyond the bounds of justice. Thus, when the elector of Brandenburg urged him, with all the plausible reasons which, according to the then modes of thinking, might have had weight, to arrest Luther, despite the safe-conduct he had given to him, he adhered faithfully to his sense of honour and to his word.

The lofty notion of the imperial office, which reveals itself in the state-papers written by Charles, merely referred to its dignity, glory, and its high mission, and not to absolute power at home, or love of conquest abroad. This is clearly shown by his policy in the affairs of Germany and Italy. Often has it been remarked that Charles could have easily taken advantage of the troubles in Germany at that period for augmenting his own power. The whole nation clung to him, the nobility and the cities were hostile to the princes, and the princes were disunited among themselves. The Protestants, moreover, despite Luther's outlawry, and the laws against

themselves, which, it is true, were not fully enforced, and were not attributed by them to Charles himself, but to the influence of others, were not altogether hostile to the emperor; they still continued to rely on him. The nobility were wholly devoted to him, and Sickingen, upon whom all eyes were turned, as upon the hero of the nation in this time of trouble and danger, would have achieved and ventured all things for the emperor. The emperor might have augmented his power immeasurably, if he had simply resolved; under the pretext of church reform, to reduce the ecclesiastical princes of Germany to the rank which the bishops occupied in other Christian states; and he might withal have still reserved the power to retrace a few of his steps at the opportune moment, so as to avoid a total rupture with the church. But such ambitious profiting of unquiet times, such a disregard for ancient obligations and for legitimate possession, never once entered into the mind of Charles. Sickingen acted on his own account and fell; with him fell the chief strength and hope of the nobility. Of all the self-willed heroes and princes of Germany, he was the most sincerely devoted to the emperor; and it is doubtful, if any of the others, on realizing their ambitious schemes, would have designed, or accomplished, so much as he, for the greatness of Germany. What comprehensive views he entertained in carrying on his enterprise is shown by many proofs. Even in the peasants' war, an active part was taken by many nobles, who could not all plead, like Gotz von Berlichingen, that they had acted under compulsion. The first demands of the peasants were not unjust; and hence it is here difficult to decide how much the above-mentioned participation of the nobles is to be attributed to accident, to well-meaning intentions, or to grasping ambition. As the whole affair speedily took a frightful turn, and the issue was unfortunate, this circumstance was forgotten; and (as always happens in such cases) the failure of the attempt produced a totally opposite reaction. The power of the princes was strengthened in consequence of the unhappy issue of the first attempt for general freedom, and doubly so among the Protestants, through the confiscation of the bishoprics. Thus was laid the first spark of that war among the German princes, which, after the troubles of the earlier period had quickly blown

over, lay smouldering for well nigh a whole generation, until at last it burst out into an open conflagration.

As protector of Germany, as king of Spain, and sovereign of the two Sicilies, Charles was called upon, in the first place, to wage war against the Turks and the formidable Solyman. As emperor, he conceived himself bound to oppose a legal resistance to the religious innovators; and now the French king was to be added, as the third and most dangerous enemy of all. Francis the First, although not choosing at first openly to declare war in his own name, began it in the most odious manner, both by secretly instigating and fomenting the troubles in Germany, and by taking advantage of the popular rising in Spain, in order to invade Navarre. This latter step, however, produced the opposite effect. The democratic character, which the revolt of the Spanish cities assumed from the very outset, had already induced the nobles to take part with the king; and this French invasion now aroused the whole nation, which, of itself, and by its own energies, crushed their tumults, and restored order. On his return to Spain, Charles proved that he merited this good fortune by the magnanimity he displayed towards those who had taken part in these disturbances.

From that moment he appears to have wholly gained the love of the Spaniards, and rarely has a people retained such devoted attachment to their king. He is to be considered as the real founder of Spanish greatness, as the creator not only of the material power, but of that moral energy and grandeur, to which the Spanish nation was by and through him exalted. Isabella and Ximenes had prepared the way for him, but the very tumults we have adverted to prove how little the Spanish constitution and Spanish modes of thinking were at that time moulded into any very fixed or satisfactory form. For Germany, for Italy, for Europe, Charles, as emperor, was the champion of the ancient faith, of the ancient constitution, and the champion too of justice. As king of Spain, however, he proved by many admirable institutions, quite adapted to the genius of the nation, that besides the courage to defend old institutions, he was by no means wanting in energy and intellect to originate and found new ones, when his course of action was unimpeded, when he was amid a nation that was of one mind and one heart with himself. As the natural

result of the turn that the popular rising in Spain had taken, he henceforth, we cannot exactly say, favoured, but at least honoured and loved the nobility. He thus came to inspire the Spanish nobles with that high moral spirit, which even in the times of Philip the Second, when their degeneracy began to be perceptible, reflected such lustre on the Spanish monarchy, that scarcely any other nation could then compete with the Spaniards in high-minded feeling.

With all the favour he evinced towards the nobles, yet Charles was far from being disposed to crush the third estate, the cities, or to encroach on the free constitution of Spain, which on the contrary he upheld, although sometimes suffering detriment thereby, and indeed in respect to parliamentary rights, Spain may be considered at that time as the freest monarchy in Europe. It is undeniable that Charles grew more and more attached to Spain, and at last loved it the most. He was not however thereby alienated from Germany, which even in his last touching farewell he called his country, although to him, as of old to so many of her heroes and great men, she had been no grateful country. From the vast scope of his duties, all of which he strove to fulfil with equal conscientiousness, it was Charles's fate to encounter the most contradictory reproaches. Thus while in Germany he was described as a haughty, stern Spaniard, the Spaniards complained of his love for Germany, and his frequent journeys thither.

In his first war with France, fortune favoured Charles so much, that at the very time when his empire was being enlarged beyond the seas, when the gold-mines of the new world had become his, his heroic generals brought the French king to him as a captive, and he saw himself, to all outward appearance at least, the master of Europe, whom nothing henceforth could resist. This outward semblance his enemies and rivals knew but too well how to profit by. This glorious victory he owed, it is true, not to himself, but to the martial heroes, of whom he had around him so many. But we must esteem it absolutely a portion of his fame, looking to the whole course of his life, that everywhere, as well in war as in state affairs, by sea and by land, he was encompassed by such great men, that he knew how to appreciate their value, to employ them, to gather them around him, and to attach them to his service. How very different it was with King



Francis the First, whose very panegyrists must allow, that while he often lent an ear to incompetent favourites, he grudged his real generals a victory, and felt even petty discontent on such occasions. Charles honoured great men, he appreciated their qualities, and thereby attached them to himself. It was one of the noblest victories of all he had gained over Francis, when he deprived him of Bourbon, at once the first of his vassals and one of the best generals of the age, and subsequently of the great Doria. Bourbon's act, which was almost necessitated by the violent steps taken against him, if it cannot be altogether justified, may yet be palliated, and moreover must not be judged by the principles of public law subsequently established; it must, on the contrary, be judged according to the then existing relations of the great vassals. In no case can Charles be censured for having availed himself of this circumstance, since Francis had turned against him very different, and indeed all and every imaginable means and advantages. The German princes were also at that time still vassals of the emperor, and hence although their leaguings with the French king might be rightly considered as a proof of unpatriotic sentiment, yet it could not be regarded as high treason. In the description and judgment of the reign of King Francis the First, an error is usually committed, which is not uncommon in the estimate formed of distinguished characters. We regard them too much as retaining their uniformity in every period; we form an image of the character in its most striking epoch, and then regard this as the character itself, without taking into account the changes which it may have undergone in the course of its development. Undoubtedly the youthful hero, who was the first to vanquish the Swiss, till then esteemed invincible, and who was dubbed a knight on the battle-field by his faithful Bayard, gives a fine image of the young king, and a still greater lustre also is reflected upon him from Bayard, and from the French nobility in general, then distinguished for such chivalrous virtues. In his subsequent career, however, in vain do we seek for the reappearance of those brilliant traits. Francis belonged to a not very rare class of characters, who shoot up and blossom rapidly in their first youth, then wither, and deceive the hopes they excited. The inactivity of his later life, the disorganization of the internal administration of his kingdom, the influence

now of a mother, now of a mistress, or a favourite, over the course of state affairs, the many immoral traits and unjust acts in isolated cases, the spirit of disorder in his general conduct, form a singular contrast to the moral strength and the legal order of contemporary Spain, to the restless activity of Charles, and the calm dignity which reigned in everything around him. Francis the First followed the example of Charles the Eighth and Lewis the Twelfth, who aimed at augmenting the greatness of their kingdom by distant conquests, but not by domestic ameliorations. It was the latter, however, which France at that period most needed, and by the continued neglect thereof, she sank so low at the end of the sixteenth century, as to be on the brink of ruin. Perpetual wars had exhausted that great country, abounding in such resources as it did, and yet by all these wars King Francis the First was unable to wrest anything from Charles, and only succeeded in becoming a permanent obstacle to all the mighty enterprises he planned for the well-being of all the nations of Europe. The conduct of Francis the First at the treaty of Madrid, when he took a solemn oath, confirmed by his word of honour as a knight, with the secret reservation and pre-determination to violate both, none of his panegyrists have yet had the boldness to cite as praiseworthy. Charles here fell into the error of striking out upon a middle path, on an occasion when state policy absolutely required him to choose one of two decided courses—either to retain the king in captivity, and by the confusion which would be thereby created in France, to secure himself from all danger in that quarter for ever, or else to make Francis wholly his friend by unbounded magnanimity; but of this, however, from the relations hitherto existing between them, there was but little hope. This was the greatest political error that Charles ever committed, and he felt its injurious consequences for the remainder of his life. In vain was he warned by the faithful and sagacious Gattinara, who even refused to sign a treaty which he foresaw would not be observed. Charles appears to have relied wholly upon Francis's word of honour as a knight, and as to the future, to have reckoned upon the king's alliance with Eleonora. He may also have been convinced of the justice of his claims even in respect to the duchy of Burgundy. The proceedings of Charles the Eighth, of Lewis the Twelfth,

and Francis the First, against Maximilian, Philip, and Charles, had been one unbroken chain of wrongs, of treaties arbitrarily violated, and promises unredeemed, and hence it is not surprising that Charles should appeal to ancient rights and claims, which had been often reserved.

Had King Francis observed the peace, and had he entered into an alliance with Charles against the Turks, he might then incontestably have expected every sacrifice from the latter. But to judge from his character, the motive that urged Francis the First to undertake such repeated wars was not so much avarice or regret at any losses, but rather an excessively mortified ambition. For, as his panegyrists admit, that he could not behold the successes of his generals without envy, we may easily conceive how much his deep humiliation at Pavia must have wounded and agitated him. Charles was naturally and from the first so little disposed to a war with France, that we may on the contrary say, that it was an hereditary principle of the Austro-Burgundian house to avoid a war at all costs with that country, and by negotiations, leagues, and family alliances, to preserve a friendly understanding with the royal house of France. Even Maximilian and Philip the Fair had already acted on these principles. As often as these alliances were dissolved on the French side, they were nevertheless renewed on the Austro-Burgundian. It was still a matter of recent recollection, that when Charles the Eighth had broken off his betrothment with Margaret, Philip the Fair, who was particularly well disposed to the French, again negotiated a double family alliance, in order to draw closer the understanding between the French and the Austro-Burgundian houses; and that when Claudia likewise, who had been promised to Charles, was given to Francis, duke d'Angoulême, subsequently King Francis the First, his union with the younger sister Renata was nevertheless shortly afterwards agreed to. Charles the Fifth likewise followed this principle; for when he united his beloved sister Eleonora to Francis, he indisputably meditated a lasting alliance. The cause of this early adopted pacific system was in the first place to be looked for in the wishes of the Netherlanders, who were always the first to feel the disadvantageous effects of a French war. The second cause was the idea, entertained especially by Charles, that all Christian nations should form

but one European republic, or family as it were, wherein all disputes should be decided by law ; or at least, if war were unavoidable, it should yet be carried on with forbearance, as a kind of chivalrous combat, while the full strength of the nations of Europe should be exclusively concentrated in energetic hostilities against their hereditary foes—the Mahomedans. Hence the stipulation repeated in almost every treaty of peace, that Francis should make common cause with the emperor against the Turks. This idea must not be forgotten even in the famous challenge he sent to Francis ; a challenge which, according to the manners of those times, was not so strange as it would be to ours. He was incontestably in earnest in sending it. Charles was by disposition and on principle pacific, and slow to take offence ; but once aroused and irritated, he was like an angry lion. Long-continued injuries only, attacks repeatedly renewed, impelled the emperor to adopt other principles and to form serious designs upon the interior of France. Such designs would not have remained without effect, if England, instead of a capricious Henry the Eighth, wholly bent upon establishing despotism at home, and incapable of any great views, had then possessed a warlike Edward, or a Henry the Fifth, and Charles had not been compelled, in opposition to so many foes, to split his strength.

He was one of those characters which, because they are collected and outwardly calm, are esteemed cold. Yet it is often precisely the noblest and deepest feelings that recede from the surface and hide themselves from the world, so that in the outward bearing of the person, understanding, moderation, and dignity alone hold sway. Vehement as Charles could become, if he were once driven by repeated attacks from his wonted self-command, he was yet invariably placable, as he proved by his repeated treaties of peace with Francis. He would readily have made great sacrifices, if Francis would only have united with him in his great enterprises for the general security and peace of Europe, or have but ceased to throw obstacles in his way. This among other circumstances we see by the last treaty he concluded with him. He then stood as conqueror, within two days' march of Paris, where every one was in flight ; yet he offered the most advantageous terms, and would have granted a considerable

portion of the Netherlands, or even Milan—the long-contested Milan—to one of the sons of the French king, if he would not further oppose him in his endeavours to restore peace and order in Germany, and would but enter into a sincere alliance. It might not perhaps have been advisable to push the successes he had gained too far; but Charles had still decidedly the advantage, and in no case need have made such great sacrifices.

Of all the censures uttered against Charles, the most singular is, perhaps, that on the repeated invitation of the French king and of his sister, he relied so far upon his rival's honour as to risk travelling through his dominions. It ought rather to astonish us that the possibility of violating the law of nations and the king's word could have been openly discussed in the French court, and that Charles actually required all his calm composure while he resided there, in order to resist many an unseemly and importunate demand. How much dignity and delicacy were displayed in the answer he made to the king, when the latter presented the duchess d'Estampes to him, with these words:—"See this lady, too, counsels me to keep you here." "If the counsel be good, it ought to be followed," replied Charles. This quiet reproof, undoubtedly, expressed delicately but plainly what the emperor must have felt at this speech of the French monarch.

Francis was an enemy that wearied Charles, although the latter always had the advantage in war; he thwarted and impeded him in his operations, and this was the more vexatious, because Charles really wished to be at peace with him. A very different and more formidable foe was Solymán, a man of noble personal qualities. Solymán had mounted the throne of the Osmanlis at the same time that Charles entered on the great theatre of history at the deliberations of his first great diet. Solymán was wholly inspired with the love of fame; he read Cæsar's Commentaries translated into his own language; he withheld from Charles the title of emperor. As lord of the Byzantine capital, he would himself be Roman emperor and master of the world; as there was but one God and one sun in the heavens, so could there be but one ruler upon earth. He felt no repugnance to learning and the fine arts, and was ~~not~~ <sup>never</sup> tolerant. Being on one occasion exhorted

to persecute and extirpate the Christians, and the Jews from his empire, he pointed to a blooming garden lying before him, and asked if it was not the very variety of flowers and plants that made it so beautiful and magnificent? Nevertheless, when mastered by love or any other passion, he could be cruel even towards his own relatives. Of what avail too was it, that the sultan's sentiments were nobler and milder, when the spirit of the Turkish state and people in respect to the Christians still remained at that period wholly fanatic, and their mode of carrying on war utterly barbarous, so that the Turks were then rightly considered as the general foes of the civilized European world, and of mankind itself. Such was also the belief and judgment of all European nations. It would be very unreasonable in us to transport back to those elder times the subsequent relations which have sprung up since the commencement of the eighteenth century between the Turks and the Christians of Europe. Of this the French king himself was so well aware, that he scarcely ventured openly to acknowledge his alliance with the Turks. According to the then existing law of nations, and in the circumstances of the times, it was undoubtedly, what it was universally considered in that age, an act of treachery towards the general interests and well-being of the European commonwealth.

With his claims to the imperial dignity, Solyman meditated seriously on conquering, not Vienna only, but Germany also. Charles threw up a barrier at least against these pretensions by his campaign in Hungary, although no decisive battle ensued. The retreat of the great Turkish army left the advantage so decidedly on the side of Charles, that he had resolved to pursue it, and to profit to the utmost of these favourable circumstances. He yielded very unwillingly to the representations of the other generals, who were better acquainted with the nature of the country and the difficulties of the enterprise. As sovereign, Charles was mild and cautious; but as general, on the contrary, he was always disposed to the most daring, nay the most perilous decisions. Had Europe been tranquil, had Germany at least been united, history would have had a glorious spectacle to point to, namely, Charles in battle with a foe worthy of him. Even if we consider exaggerated the expectations of one of his great generals, the famous marquis de Guasto, who

believed that everything must be reconquered from the Turks which had been lost since the time of Godfrey of Bouillon; yet Hungary at least would have been certainly liberated, Germany and Austria secured beforehand from so many desolating inroads of the Turkish power. The briefest explanation why nothing further could be accomplished in this quarter may perhaps be found in the following anecdote:—When Charles was forced to fly from Inspruck before the rebellious Maurice, the German horsemen who composed his escort told him candidly, that if he would only yield in respect to religious matters, the Germans would give him an army wherewith to conquer Constantinople. “At that price,” replied Charles, “I would not have the whole of Europe.” The expression was by no means exaggerated. Germany was then so strong, that, united, she would not only have been superior to any other military power of Europe, but also fully equal to the Turkish.

That Charles was born a great general was unanimously recognised by his contemporaries. This he proved not only by his intrepidity in every situation of danger, but, above all, by the presence of mind and the calm survey of the whole scene of action, which he displayed on the day of battle. Educated in pacific habits and in state business, he yet seemed in the decisive moment to love danger, to catch enthusiasm from the greatness of the moment; never did he lose the clear self-collectedness peculiar to him, although always disposed to give the preference to the boldest measures. By this chiefly was he distinguished from the great generals who surrounded him. Thus he it was that rendered the victory at Tunis really complete and glorious; and when, on his failure at Algiers, storm and tempest had destroyed his fleet, ruined his arms, and scattered his army, he once more it was who remained the most intrepid of all, who inspired all with courage, was everywhere at hand with aid, and sharing all the sufferings, all the privations of the commonest soldier, shrinking from no danger, was almost the last to quit the coasts of the barbarians. This enterprise against Tunis and the pirate-states of Africa was more immediately requisite to protect the Spanish and Italian coasts; and it was also of great importance for the freedom of all Europe to offer a strenuous resistance to the naval power of the Turka.

Had the Turks longer retained the sovereignty of the Mediterranean Sea, southern Italy would have probably fallen into their hands. Charles raised the maritime power of Spain to such a pitch, that it was able, under his successor, in one decisive battle, to wrest the dominion of the seas for ever from the Turks. This victory was as necessary and essential to the freedom of Europe as resistance to this people by land. With the importance of the African coasts to the welfare of Spain, Charles, like Ximenes (all whose zeal, under a like conviction, had been formerly directed to this quarter), was so deeply impressed, that even in the retirement of his latter days the intelligence of a loss sustained there by the Spaniards preyed upon his mind and aggravated his sickness.

Kind and affable as he was to all men, he knew also how to win the love of his soldiers in particular; he mingled confidentially among them, joined in their labours, was called father by them, and unboundedly loved, although he strictly enforced military discipline where justice and necessity demanded it. Boundless was the devotion of his great generals towards him, and herein he was peculiarly fortunate. Pescara, Bourbon, and Fronsberg, in his earlier days, Doria, Leyva, the marquis de Guasto, and above all, Alba, formed a circle of heroes around him, such as history at any period can rarely exhibit. The gold-mines of Peru and Mexico were his, at a time when no longer an *arrière-ban* existed, nor any general conscription was introduced by law; when the volunteer soldier served for pay alone; when money was required not only to maintain an army, but even in the first instance to collect one. Qualified by such great gifts and advantages to be a general, nay, a conqueror, he, whom his enemies accused of aiming at universal monarchy, retained merely the states he had inherited, without making, by force of arms, a single unjust conquest, or even any one of the slightest importance in Europe. He appeared not to account the same, which one Christian nation may acquire in warfare against another, as a thing desirable. He only took part in war readily, and with all his heart, when it was waged against the hereditary foes of Spain and the German nation, and of Christian Europe in general. When at Tunis he restored, twenty-two thousand Christian slaves to freedom and to their homes, he exclaimed that that alone was worth the campaign if he should even gain nothing more.



In Spain alone did Charles the Fifth achieve all he aimed at. The ceaseless warfare with France prevented Europe in general, at that time, from resisting more energetically the attacks of the Turks. In Germany, the most arduous of all the struggles he had to encounter awaited the emperor; and if his great exertions in behalf of this country did not altogether remain without beneficial effects, he, nevertheless, failed in accomplishing his designs. In Italy he effected some good, if not all that could be desired, yet as much as under the circumstances of the time was still practicable.

Since Philip-le-Bel had shackled the liberties of the church, and a perpetual approximation to despotism had become at the French court an established principle of government, that country was a dangerous neighbour for Germany, a source of disquiet and difficulty for all Europe, and a cause of political distraction in Italy. The continued pacific system of the Austro-Burgundian house was hence perhaps blameable; as from this love of peace the most favourable opportunities for utterly rooting out the evil were often neglected, and in every fresh treaty the germ of future wars and troubles was still left. From the time of Lewis the Eleventh it was easy to recognise this ruinous system of French policy for what it was, the source, namely, of every evil and every misfortune in Europe. Such it was regarded in the estimation of several sovereigns; but only they too often preferred the course of a mild and forbearing opposition to more decided measures. Then only would it have been possible to defend Christian Europe with vigour, and secure it against outward attacks, when peace and concord were restored within its bosom, and the germs of evil were removed. So much had this love of peace with France become a family principle of the Austro-Burgundian house, that even many of the princesses belonging to it, who were distinguished by their great talents for government, such as the elder Margaret, and likewise the sister of Charles himself, were guided by it, and zealously endeavoured to act in conformity therewith. Judging from the result, much as we may be disposed to censure this untimely love of peace of the Austro-Burgundian house, yet we must not forget the great and noble idea whereon it was based. This idea was that of a confederacy of Christian states, and of a conciliatory set-

tlement of all international disputes, determined by treaties and a sense of honour, together with a family alliance between the great ruling dynasties in Europe, which to that end ought ever to be drawn more and more closely together.

As will be readily acknowledged by all who possess a correct knowledge of the history, the character, and the tendencies of that age, it is not easy to conceive a greater misfortune befalling Europe, than the actual realization in full of the very extensive and deep-laid schemes of the despotic Lewis the Eleventh, the conquest-loving Charles the Eighth, and the other French kings, who, capricious as they were in dealing with treaties, had ever one uniform object in view. But, it may be said, was not then the wide-spread influence of Charles the Fifth, was not the kind of sovereignty which, despite all opposition, he still maintained over the greater part of Europe, likewise contrary to general freedom, and to the independence of nations? Was it not equally injurious and repugnant to the true ideal of a confederate Christian commonwealth of the western nations, based upon justice, as the ambition of the kings of France could possibly have been, had they succeeded in accomplishing their object?

Those who take their point of departure from the abstract idea of the state, of a public polity and of a nation, are but too much inclined to regard this as a wholly isolated entity, existing for itself alone. But neither a state nor a nation has ever existed in such isolation. The history of the world teaches, and it needs but a little reflection to perceive, that some central point is necessary in an aggregate of states and nations, which, like those of Europe, have stood for centuries in an intercourse so close, so complex, geographically and morally so inevitable and indispensable,—some central point, whence a supreme directing influence may radiate over the whole body. Hence it is not whether such influence shall exist, for it ever has existed, and ever will do so; but of what nature it shall be, by whom and how it shall be exercised, this problem it is which requires solution; this it is whereon the freedom of the whole body politic depends, and which is worth the utmost exertions of the noblest minds. By its own nature the imperial supremacy, if it is allowable, in the language of the middle ages, thus to call that supreme influence over the free association of Christian states—an influence defined and

moulded as it was by religious and moral principles and objects—the true imperial supremacy, in this sense of the middle age, was in its own essence by no means an encroachment on the general freedom of Europe, or a form of injustice. The false imperial supremacy, however, that supremacy which does not proceed from, which is not based upon moral and religious ideas, but upon the dead mechanism of mere selfish despotism, is indeed the greatest misfortune which can befall mankind. During the older period of the Christian empire in the middle age, this form of government was on the contrary extremely propitious to general freedom; and with many defects and failings, no period was so favourable as that to the development of all the peculiar energies of national life, or so far remote from any kind of universal despotism. It was Germany which possessed and exercised this supreme influence over the European commonwealth; but not Germany alone; joined with her were Italy and the pope. Extremely favourable to the general freedom likewise was this very quality of the two chief powers in Christendom, that were so intimately connected, were mutually based upon each other, were so closely related, and yet withal independent of one another. In this system, individual acts of despotism, such as those which the Hohenstaufen, especially, too often committed, were, it is true, possible, but no thoroughly despotic constitution. Even the most violent, the most arbitrary emperors, were unable permanently to enslave or oppress the head of the church, because the authority of the latter lay in a totally different sphere, inaccessible to them, and resting on faith and public opinion; and by this very circumstance, this authority was in itself a bulwark of general freedom. When now, that protectorate, by which Europe had been before guided, had lost much of its ancient strength and consideration, Europe and Germany felt, with the Turkish conquerors pressing upon them, that Maximilian must have a successor, who might once more be emperor, and should be emperor in the old sense of the word. The scales fluctuated, till at last the great election decided in favour of Charles, in favour of Germany and Spain. Without seeking to determine whether this decision was right, by mere personal or national considerations or predilections, a very simple principle, applicable to all ages, may perhaps best serve to guide our

opinions. The ruling influence over Europe, which an absolute or despotic monarchy may possess and exercise, will be likewise absolutely monarchical or despotic. The influence which a republic would exert upon the European commonwealth would be also republican in this sense, that it is disposed to favour and support the smaller and weaker states and nations against the more powerful; an attempt which, if successful, tends to a greater subdivision of states and nations, and, if a failure, leads directly to the total subjugation of the smaller states and their incorporation with the larger. The influence enjoyed by a federative state, free as to its representative system,—a state which is itself a union of confederate states and nations, like Austria under Charles the Fifth—will in like manner be of a federative kind, that is to say, bound by public law, based on justice (setting aside special exceptions), naturally disposed to peace, and where personal motives do not interpose, in itself conducive to freedom. This principle may perhaps best serve to test the true value, for the welfare of Europe, of the preponderating influence of Austria, France, and England, which at that period and in modern times strove for mastery, and gained alternately the upper hand. It need not be pointed out how utterly inappropriate is the expression *universal monarchy*, selected by his enemies, for that species of authority which Charles, as emperor, as king of Spain, and as protector of Italy, undoubtedly exercised in Europe, and was resolved to maintain. Those only to whom the idea of a true imperial supremacy—of a just, mild European influence, calculated to protect freedom and benefit mankind, was utterly strange, because they knew nothing, wished for nothing, but the merely selfish policy of dissimulation and covetousness abroad, and unlimited despotism at home; those, and those only, could thus distort a high moral idea. They adopted as a standard their own spirit of iniquity, and attributed it to that system of international relations. How far and in what sense all Austria, as it then existed under Charles the Fifth and Ferdinand the First, was to be called a federative state, and was moreover intended by the former to remain so by the union of the Spanish and German lines, will best appear from the last scheme of Charles before he quitted the world.

We shall now turn our attention to what he accomplished in Italy; to what he aimed at but failed to effect in Germany.

After the victory at Pavia, where the capture of the French monarch threw the world into amazement, Charles wore the appearance of being now the irresistible master of Italy, nay, of all Europe, an appearance that of itself created rivals and enemies. Even under Julius the Second and Leo the Tenth, together with the darling idea of the perfect national independence and national unity of Italy, repugnance to French sway had grown incomparably stronger. The French had made themselves odious, and it was felt on which side the most danger was to be feared. Now that the preponderance of Charles was decisive, the old crooked policy of the Italians, namely, to expel the French from Italy by the Germans and Spaniards, and these again by the former, was once more revived. It was a policy whereof the result was to render Italy for a length of time the theatre of desolating wars, and as a natural consequence to subject her precisely to the sternest foreign yoke. Clement the Seventh originated this counter policy; and when Charles's generals gained once more a decided victory, and he could now in very deed step forth as the lord of Italy, the umpire of her affairs, what use did he make of his success, when, for the second time after ten years, he quitted Spain in order to arrange the affairs first of Italy, and then of Germany? He used his victory with a moderation and forbearance rare in one so successful, and in the youthful period of life, too, the most susceptible of ambition; with a magnanimity towards individuals, towards Clement and Sforza, which had been quite unexpected, and which gained him very many, if not all, hearts in Italy. Everywhere restoring legitimate possessions, respecting hereditary claims, sparing and reconciling the greater powers, he conferred on Italy the best constitution of which she was then capable, namely, a federative constitution, which was sufficiently independent for him to conceive the idea of withdrawing all his Spanish garrisons, and of intrusting the independence of the country to the protection of an Italian federal army. He even gained over at last, in some degree, the selfish Venice, by his pacific principles of policy.

It was utterly impossible that Italy could at that time be organized otherwise than as a federal state. Hence as every union of federative states requires a centre, some leading member to direct the whole body, the only question for Italy

would be, which of the three powers the most considerable by intelligence, dignity, or size, namely, Florence, the pope, or Venice, should enjoy this pre-eminence. Florence, although the most advanced in intellectual culture, was not sufficiently powerful, and withal too agitated in her internal condition. The power of Venice was the greatest, but her preponderance would have been oppressive and ruinous to the rest of Italy, for, as the chief maritime and commercial state, she would, upon acquiring the dominion over Italy, after which she so earnestly strove, have infallibly abused that authority to crush the commerce and keep down the naval power of the other cities. An abuse of this kind was not to be feared from the popes, whose supreme influence would have been more acceptable to the other Italian states, as this power was of a nature and of a dignity totally different from all others, and as from its nature, too, a state of permanent peace was its best security, a circumstance which is desirable and appropriate in the centre of a federal state. A pacific federative system, whereof the chief member, if not formally proclaimed as such, yet by tacit acknowledgment, should be the pope, was the fittest constitution for Italy. And if the pope and the remaining states were not sufficiently powerful to withstand French aggression, there was no resource left but for the sovereign of Naples and Milan to guard the frontiers, and secure the independence of this pacific confederation. Such was the constitution Charles bestowed on Italy. To this constitution, and to Charles himself, was Italy indebted for that happy tranquillity which, after the total expulsion of the French, she enjoyed during his reign, and in the period immediately subsequent; while the other countries of Europe were torn to pieces by civil wars. And not only Italy, but all Europe, was thus indebted for that magnificent display of every art, which continued to be unfolded in Italy during the sixteenth century. For although in philosophy and learning, in poetry, and even in the plastic arts, the period of the Italian civil wars prior to Charles the Fifth, and in the first epoch of his reign, was perhaps still more prolific in genius and in original minds of the first class than the succeeding one; yet after the first impulse which periods of public ferment often impart to genius, tranquillity is indispensably necessary for its further development. This tranquillity Charles secured to

Italy, crowning the loved poet of the nation with the same hand which founded likewise the constitution, and established the peace under the shadow whereof painting and architecture, poetry and eloquence, grew up in mutual rivalry. In Spain, Charles created quite a new world even in learning, education, and poetry. Before his time the Spaniards were still a merely martial people, while in his reign they rivalled the Italians in the number of their scholars in every serious department of learning. In history, in the cultivation of the vernacular language, and in poetry, the genius of the Spanish nation burst forth at once, prolific and inventive, and in perfect harmony with the national feelings. So great was the new impulse received by the Spanish mind under Charles, in all departments of genius and learning, that even the long reign of a Philip the Second was unable to cramp it. So abundantly was the seed sown by Ximenes and Charles, that the fruits thereof, ineradicable and indestructible, continued to grow, even under a Philip. It was long before all this brilliant manifestation of the Spanish mind, whose real focus had been Charles the Fifth, became deadened and extinguished. But to Italy Charles gave precisely the only thing she could not give herself, and which was essential to the further development of Italian genius, which had already given so many noble proofs of its energy by creations of every kind.

The supremacy which Charles undoubtedly possessed and maintained in Italy was so moderate, so restrained and attempered by the spirit of forbearance and by unchangeable laws, that even his successor Philip the Second, who inherited this power from him, and was in other respects so prone to despotic measures, could not introduce into that country arbitrary rule. The re-establishment of the Sforza in Milan and of the Medici in Florence is a proof of Charles's conciliatory policy in Italy, as the former had deserted his cause, and the Medicæan pope, Clement the Seventh, had been the chief originator of this second war. We may rather censure him for not granting Milan to his faithful Pescara, who possessed such high claims to reward. Pescara, daring and inventive, was not only the first captain, but the greatest man of his nation, who clearly understood its true interests and welfare. He had the means indeed of conquering a crown for himself, but was devoted with boundless zeal to the service of

Charles, because in him and his protecting influence he saw the salvation of his country. He was devoted to him, not servilely, however, but with the spirit of a freeman, openly expressing censure and discontent when he believed there was cause and reason for it. That his fidelity, that his designs were doubtful, that his ambition was something like Wallenstein, is one of the many inaccuracies with which malice and neglect of original authorities have filled the history of Charles the Fifth. That Pescara did not receive that well-deserved reward, was undoubtedly the result of no want of appreciation on Charles's side, but was only the effect of the great weight which hereditary claims and rightful possession ever possessed with him. It is easy to justify him for not restoring the freedom of the Florentines, for they had long proved themselves incapable of enduring freedom. If a permanent republican form of government, like that of Venice, could not be established among them, if an hereditary ruler was indispensable, who had better-founded claims to the dignity than the Medici?

If Charles's proceedings, however, in Italy, be open at all to censure, it is perhaps that he yielded too much to two popes, Clement the Seventh and Paul the Third, in their Italian politics, and in their private views. If at an earlier period, at the close of the fifteenth century, the popes sought with all zeal to revive the power of the ecclesiastical states, to regain everything that had been wrested from them, their policy may be justified, because these exertions were not directed to their own personal profit, but to the security, the dignity, and the independence of the Roman see. But what unpleasant reflections it excites to behold those two popes, Clement the Seventh and more particularly Paul the Third (whose long pontificate occurred precisely at a period so dangerous to the church and society)—to behold them, we say, apparently bent upon nothing so earnestly as to secure an hereditary principality to their family. If we look at the many great men who surrounded Charles in Spain and Italy, and then inquire which of the German princes and nobles, besides his brother Ferdinand, was his intellectual vice-gerent and co-operator in all his mighty designs, we shall find but a sorry answer. The reason was, not that men of genius and energy were wanting in Germany, but that the



existing energies were dissipated in the universal moral ferment, and were mostly alienated from the emperor, if not actively opposed to him. Of all the German princes, the most devoted to him was the Count Palatine Charles Frederick. Although not an elector, his activity had had great influence on the election of Charles. A faithful servant of his father, Philip the Fair, the Palatine had been from his youth upward a friend and companion of Charles. Neither a passion (unsuitable in his circumstances) for Charles's sister, Eleonora, nor a subsequent suit for the hand of Mary, the widowed queen of Hungary, could disturb their friendly relations. The Palatine spent a great part of his life in suits of the kind; he was unwearied in journeying backwards and forwards between Spain and Germany; he was a prince of amiable qualities rather than of distinguished abilities. Without being a very warm adherent of the new doctrines, he yet followed the stream, and it was this circumstance that at last estranged him from Charles. What deep roots their ancient friendship still possessed in the breast of the latter is shown by the proofs of tenderness he displayed on their reconciliation, when the army of the Smalcald League was dispersed. Of the more youthful princes, none succeeded so completely in gaining the favour and confidence of Charles as Maurice of Saxony, who afterwards abandoned him. He was distinguished for understanding and activity, and possessed great military capacity. His self-command, outward moderation, and dignity of manner seem especially to have won Charles's regard, the more so as among many other German princes of that age, a certain chivalrous impetuosity of manners prevailed, rather than any dignified, refined address. Charles loved thoughtful, reserved characters, like William of Orange and Maurice of Saxony. The longer Charles ruled, the more he acquired the habit of suppressing his own feelings, and gained the firm conviction that the world could be governed by the understanding alone. But that dignity of manner, and that thoughtful, noble reserve, which promises so much, and with some, as with the emperor himself, conceals deep feeling, great objects, and noble sentiments, may also serve to veil mere vulgar selfishness and ambition, and most cruelly deceive the confidence they inspire, as indeed happened to Charles in the case of Maurice.

In Germany, as already related, Charles aimed at nothing

else than to restore the religious peace that had been destroyed, and to avert a schism in the church. On this point, too, he had to endure in his own time the most opposite censures. While at Rome, he was said to be encroaching on the jurisdiction of the pope by arbitrarily intermeddling in ecclesiastical affairs; it was reported throughout Germany that he sought to extirpate the Lutherans. This charge is so little confirmed by history, that more recent historians have on the contrary preferred a very different and more refined accusation, namely, that he in reality secretly favoured the Protestants, but only with the selfish view of thereby humbling the pope. This hypothesis has arisen from those writers being unable to enter sufficiently enough into Charles's sentiments, and in general into the modes of thinking in that age. Influenced by the spirit of our own times, and our own modes of thinking, it has seemed to them impossible that a monarch so sagacious, as they yet conceive Charles to be, should have had no other object in view than the one he actually did have; that, according to his mode of thinking, he should make it the first and holiest of his duties, the dearest of his wishes, yea the very object of his life, to avert the misfortune of an ecclesiastical schism. Neither is the censure of an arbitrary and violent interference in church affairs well founded. The first and very important step, that of permitting Luther's appearance at the diet, can alone be censured, since his religious opinions as to faith, grace, and the non-freedom of the will, were not of a nature to be decided on at such a place, by the assembled princes and electors. On the other hand, the grievances of the German nation against Rome, particularly with respect to the money which was so often carried out of the country, could, as had already often happened, have been remedied without Luther. But after the Protestants had refused to recognise any council of the church, still less the authority of Rome itself, or to enter into any kind of negotiation with the ecclesiastical power, there was no resource left but for the state, and the head of the state, to negotiate with them. Had Charles aimed at curbing the church, and more especially the pope, as much as modern writers have conceived, he would undoubtedly have made the commencement of such an attempt in Spain itself. We should very much mistake the then

condition of Spain, were we to suppose he dared not do so on account of the state of opinion in that country. As in general the mutual limits between episcopal and papal authority have been often a subject of dispute, so likewise, in the case of the Spanish as well as of other bishops, old claims, grievances, and controversies were not wanting, which Charles might have made subservient to such ambitious projects, had he entertained them. This policy would have been the easier, because we see in all the Spanish writers of that age how odious both the popes Clement the Seventh and Paul the Third personally were to the Spanish people. It cannot be said that Charles favoured the Protestants; he conciliated them as far as his conscience permitted, because he desired not a war, but strove to maintain peace with them, and always entertained the hope that a reconciliation and return to the church were still possible. To this conviction was owing the dilatoriness of his proceedings. He hoped that if the ferment of minds did not wholly subside of itself, it would at least diminish. He cannot, moreover, be fairly censured for not selecting the moment, when Germany was menaced by a most formidable attack from the Turks, to bring the contest with the Protestants to a decisive issue, or to inflame it more fiercely than ever. This outward calm before the breaking out of the civil war was but delusive. The schism had already struck root too deeply in men's minds. For one Charles, for one Melancthon, there were many thousands burning with fierce hatred and wild exasperation, and some also who had private objects of ambition in view. There occurred at this period, wherein the increasing animosity already prognosticated civil war, a circumstance which, although it affected individuals only, made nevertheless a deep impression on the whole age; one, namely, of two Spanish brothers, had in Germany embraced the new doctrines, whereat the other was enraged, and coming also into Germany, met his brother, when at last their mutual exasperation and fury led to the murder of the one by the hands of the other. This, although a mere isolated occurrence, yet made an impression so deep that scarcely an author of that time can be found who has not told the tale at full length, and has not spoken with peculiar horror of this fratricide. It was, as it were, a melancholy presentiment of

that curse of blindness which, since the frightful schism in religion, was impending over mankind,—of all that blood of brethren which, in the course of a century and a half, was yet to be shed in France and Spain, in the Low Countries, in England and Germany, upon the battle-field and upon the scaffold.

During the few years that immediately preceded the breaking out of the war, Charles laboured with indescribable and quite inexhaustible patience at the work of peace and concord. He was supported by several scholars of both parties, who were the most respected for their learning, their moral dignity, and their spirit of equity. But he laboured in vain. The hostile leagues of the Catholic and the Protestant princes grew more and more violent in their opposition. Actions were daily multiplied, which, irrespective of religion and the church, no emperor could tolerate, who would be emperor in more than the name. On no occasion did Charles display so much the full force of his character and military talent as in this Smalcald war. At the opening of the campaign, his situation appeared utterly desperate; but while his confidence, we may even say his cheerfulness, rose with the danger itself,—while he knew how, by his personal qualities, by his kindness, and affable familiarity, to inspire his soldiers with a confidence that enabled them to achieve impossibilities,—an indescribable blindness and confusion, on the other hand, seem to have overpowered the leaders of the Smalcald league. As the leader of his party, the Landgrave had often given proofs of his courage and prudence; but now, on the decisive day of danger, he too deceived the confidence that all had placed in him. After the battle of Mühlberg, where Charles unexpectedly triumphed over the greatest danger that ever menaced him, it was the expression of his inmost feeling, when, alluding to Cæsar's celebrated phrase, he wrote, "I came, I saw, and God conquered." Incredible was the impression produced both in and out of Germany by this sudden, unexpected turn of things. In Germany, everything, as though smitten by a supernatural terror, submitted to him without terms or conditions. To the rest of Europe he appeared a great hero, who, extricating himself from a most perilous situation, had achieved in the space of a few months, and without any resources but what

his invincible courage gave him, a complete military and moral conquest of Germany, at that period still deemed the first and most powerful of all countries. Every name of honour was heaped upon him, and he was paralleled with Cæsar and Alexander.

An embassy from the czar of Muscovy, and another from the khan of Tartary (the shah of Persia had before sent an embassy to congratulate him on his accession to the throne), served the more to exalt him in the eyes of the multitude as the first monarch of Europe.

In the first moment of victory he could have acted and ruled in Germany according to his pleasure ; for the attachment to him was great, and great was the number of his faithful friends and servants, while such as had been his foes were smitten with terror. It was the right moment radically to change the Germanic constitution, if such had been his wish. He might have done so, too, without violation of right ; for, which of the belligerent princes had not themselves, in one way or another, violated the constitution ? He was entitled to consider all the ancient relations terminated, and a totally new state of things introduced, since the belligerent princes had even ceased to recognise him as emperor, and had styled him simply Charles of Ghent. But of success and victory he made no other use than to forward more effectually the work of religious peace, at which he had so long and so zealously laboured, but without a prosperous result. And with how much conscientiousness did he do this ! He failed because he was so far exalted above his contemporaries, because these participated so little in his mild and magnanimous sentiments, because in his sense of justice he stood single and alone in his age ; but can this be made a subject of reproach ? By cautious forbearance he was able to hinder the conflict from assuming precisely the name and character of a religious war. Neither was it one in reality ; not merely because a Protestant prince sided with Charles, while some Protestant as well as Catholic ones remained neutral ; but because the very method of waging hostilities (a method indeed which in succeeding times was by no means imitated) proved that it was not a religious war. Everything good and great, even if it apparently fails, produces its unfailing and indestructible effects. Thus while in France and Eng-

land blood was flowing in torrents, in Germany, even after the attempted reunion had proved impossible, a religious peace, at least between the Catholic and Protestant parties, was still possible, and even subsisted for half a century. But to whom was Germany indebted for this blessing but to the emperor Charles, who made such unwearied efforts to bring about a religious pacification? These attempts had the effect not only of softening the sentiments of a few of the better disposed, but also of developing the conditions of a religious peace, and of an order of things so new to the world. The ultimate rupture of the peace at the close of half a century, and the breaking out of a most tremendous war, cannot be adduced as derogating from this benefit; for if the spirit of Charles had been more responded to, if he had but awakened similar sentiments to his own in Germany, never would a thirty years' war have been enkindled. Here, however, he also committed one great political error. Being once more in a position where decided measures alone, where one of two opposite courses alone—absolute severity or unconditional clemency—could effectually accomplish his object, he selected a middle path, bounded on either hand by justice and mercy. This remark is applicable to his conduct towards all the belligerent princes, but chiefly towards the elector John Frederick of Saxony. Alba conjured him, if he would not grant Saxony to his brother as a fief, lest he should draw down upon himself the charge of thirsting after conquest, at least to partition it, to erect its cities into free cities of the empire, and to divide its different provinces among the different petty princes. If he would not even do this, he entreated him to restore the whole province intact to the elector John Frederick, who might perhaps be entirely gained over by such magnanimity, but in no case to confer it upon Maurice. The faithful Ferdinand, too, was against Maurice; but it was all in vain, Charles had given his word; he fulfilled it, and was fearfully deceived.\*

The elector John Frederick gained, during his captivity, the respect, nay, the friendship of Charles. The latter was at first more irritated against him than against any, because he opposed the most unbending resistance of all to his attempts at church reunion. Even during his captivity, John Frederick, after ceding many considerable territories for himself

and his heirs, refused to subscribe Charles's formula of reunion, the Interim, because he considered it contrary to his religion and his conscience. The Landgrave, on the contrary, could he have obtained his liberty on that condition, showed a readiness to comply. This very constancy of John Frederick was a result and a proof, if not of a comprehensive understanding, at least of an honest heart. Charles's interest, too, for the conscientious prince may have, perhaps, increased, the more he felt himself deceived in Maurice, his favourite up to this period.

When this prince, who was also a general of his, turned against him, surprised and forced him to fly, Charles at last perceived that his object, namely, the avoidance of a schism in the church, was impracticable. From this moment he abandoned to his brother Ferdinand the task of concluding a treaty, adapted to the actual posture of affairs, as well as to the state of ecclesiastical schism, henceforth unavoidable, and also committed to his care all the affairs of Germany. We should err in supposing that, because he had no means of resistance on the first moment of surprise, he was, therefore, altogether without resources. In a few months, through the active co-operation of his sister Maria, he stood at the head of an army more than fifty thousand strong. That it would not have been difficult for him to draw even Protestant princes over to his side, we see by the example of one of the most enterprising among them, the Margrave Albert of Brandenburg, who entered into his service. Charles always found still very great support in Germany. Had he but chosen to employ that powerful army in Germany to avenge himself upon Maurice, and to reinstate the elector John Frederick, he would still have easily gained the upper hand. Had he but yielded in respect to religion, all Germany would even then have rallied round him. But this was precisely what he could not, and would not, do. When he saw that the desired reunion, on which he had wasted so many years of labour, was, in the prevailing temper of minds, utterly impracticable, he lost all interest in Germany; and from that period we perceive in him a decided repugnance and indifference towards all German affairs.

In retaining the two princes, John Frederick and the Landgrave, in captivity, Charles had no other object in view than

for a season to deprive of influence, the two individuals, whereof the one by his inflexible obstinacy, the other by his restless activity, stood most in the way of the much-desired ecclesiastical reunion, until such reunion had become in itself sufficiently consolidated. With regard to the Landgrave, Charles was so far from miscalculating in this matter, that that prince, even during his captivity, offered to accept the Interim; and after recovering his freedom, did not even appear to be the same man, but had lost his characteristic energy and courage, and all his former authority. Many unjust censures have been cast on Charles for retaining the Landgrave in captivity, which are now proved to be utterly unfounded. The emperor was wholly free from blame in the matter; the fault lay with the negotiators, who had promised to the Landgrave more than the former knew and approved of. In regard to his policy, however, his conduct may, perhaps, deserve censure in this as in several other cases, because, in a period of violent revolution and universal contest, he did not always adopt the most decisive course, but had only too often recourse to moderate and half-measures. Yet, on the whole, the reunion Charles attempted failed, not on account of a few erroneous measures, but because the division, the ferment, and the exasperation of minds was too universal.

Maurice had set himself up to be the protector of German freedom; but the voice of the people was not with him. Neither was it well possible that it should be, as duplicity is never forgiven by the public. In the very same sense as Maurice, the king of France called himself the guardian of German freedom, while he was seizing some cities of the empire, which Maurice, in a treaty of alliance, just as if the empire were already his, had dared to give up to him. To resist this encroachment Charles led his army, taking up arms for the last time in defence of the honour and inviolability of the empire, as well as the security of his beloved Netherlands. Here, also, he was unsuccessful, being unable to recover Metz. In his retreat, however, he survived the great victory of St. Quentin, in the reign of his successor, which on the quarter towards France seemed to guarantee complete security, and even something more.

Charles now realized the wish he had long cherished, of



closing his life in calm seclusion and silent communion with his soul. His entire life had been one unbroken struggle ; he had, from the first, regarded and felt his sovereignty as a mission, a mighty duty, and a burden ; for a whole generation he had borne that burden on his shoulders, and had held the rudder with a strong hand, while Europe was violently tossed about in the storms of the time. So far was he from being devoid of feeling, that we may rather trace in him a disposition to melancholy. The deep impression made on him by his mother's death, which, after she had been long in a state of melancholy madness, occurred shortly before his own end, is in this respect worthy of notice. And yet has this resolution, too, of withdrawing into a quiet retreat, given occasion to the most singular commentaries ; a resolution, known to have been taken, and often expressed by him at even a very early period, when he was at the summit of success, and in the prime of manly vigour. But although possessing deep and earnest feelings, he was outwardly most cheerful, intellectual in social intercourse, and extremely susceptible of friendship. Many and touching proofs exist of his tender attachment to his nearest kindred, particularly to his two sisters, Eleonora and Mary (who, upon his taking leave of the world, attended him to Spain), and in general of his friendship for all about him, who were at all capable of responding to such a feeling. With his great servants, both in war and in the cabinet, his intercourse was friendly ; he was affable to all ; and innumerable are the pointed answers, intellectual traits, and significant sayings, which the age preserved of his. Although in such a case much may, perhaps, be inaccurately attributed to a great man, yet if the most remarkable and best-attested traits are alone selected, a book might easily be compiled, which would be one of the most instructive of its kind.

Thus withdrew from the world a man, who, as king of Spain, was, without comparison, the best and greatest of all who have preceded or followed him ; who made Spain what she was for two centuries ; who, as emperor of Germany, had always aimed at the noblest objects with indefatigable effort ; a man who in his mighty soul embraced all the relations of his age and of Europe ; and, with the clearest intellect, saw through the complicated problems she had to

solve, and discerned the formidable dangers that menaced her.

At his death all Christian nations rivalled each other in funeral festivals, of unexampled pomp, in honour of his name and greatness. Even in the capital of the Turkish empire, a noble-minded foe honoured by a funeral festival the memory of the great monarch who had left the world. Europe appeared to feel that the hero and champion of the age was no more; an age which, now that this last pillar of strength and union had also disappeared, was the more surely hurrying on to a century of war and anarchy.

## LECTURES XV. & XVI.

### HISTORY OF EUROPE UNDER THE SUCCESSORS OF CHARLES.

THE age towards which Europe was hurrying after the death of Charles the Fifth was indeed well calculated to fill his soul with melancholy, whose mind foresaw it. Long civil wars were the first inevitable consequence of the schism in the church. They distracted Germany, Switzerland, France, the Spanish monarchy, and England for upwards of a century and a half, reckoning from the peasants' war to the persecution of the Huguenots under Lewis the Fourteenth. At length, first in Holland, and then from the time of Queen Anne in England, and the emperor Joseph the First, new and milder principles of policy became predominant in Europe. Not long after the first religious peace had been established in Germany by Charles the Fifth and his brother Ferdinand, civil wars broke out in France and the Netherlands; and scarcely had a better epoch arrived for France with the accession of Henry the Fourth, and scarcely had the freedom of Holland been recognised after a long contest, when in Germany the long-repressed warfare broke out afresh with redoubled fury. At last, after thirty years of distraction and bloodshed, a treaty of peace was there signed, at the very time when in England, after many other cruel executions, the unhappy King Charles himself was brought to the scaffold.

While in England, out of the strife of contending elements a new form of legal liberty already began to spring forth, Lewis the Fourteenth in France set on foot a general persecution against the Huguenots, not less cruel and unjust than that which has earned for Philip the Second among posterity the reputation of a tyrant. These civil wars were an inevitable result of the religious schism, not only by reason of the intimate alliance between church and state, but also because the new doctrines generated new and peculiar principles and parties in reference to the state, as well as in matters of religion. The early political fanaticism of the Anabaptists in Germany was, it was true, at once and universally abhorred by both parties, crushed, and then again forgotten. Hence also in the period from Charles the Fifth, down to the thirty years' war, the religious contests partook in Germany less of a political character than in any other country of Europe. In France, on the contrary, among the adherents of Calvin this political character is plainly visible, not indeed in unbridled fanaticism such as that in the first outbreak of the troubles in Germany, but on the most systematic principles, which on that very account acquired a permanent influence ; among the English Puritans this was still more the case. To this must be added the opportunity of employing civil commotions as an instrument for ambitious views ; an opportunity which the combustible matter actually existing naturally offered to an immoral system of policy. The French government had set the example of holding it up as an enlightened policy to subject the Protestants in Paris to torture and death, and at the same time to support them in Germany. Even, however, without this admirable principle of a new public law, which was thus substituted for the old, but which was not imitated by other countries, the natural and inevitable connection of each religious party in the different countries led to general and multifarious violations of justice. When Queen Elizabeth supported the Huguenots in France, it was not surprising that the friends and co-religionists of the unhappy Mary Stuart should look forward with eagerness to the arrival of a Spanish fleet. Under a combination of circumstances like this, the mutual relations not only of the states themselves, but of the sovereigns and the people in each state, must have been in the highest degree vitiated, perverted, and corrupted.

Still more lamentable even than the civil wars and vast bloodshed were the general restrictions on civil liberty as well as on freedom of thought, which were the immediate consequence of the schism in the church. That comprehensive and profound intellectual culture, that great and genuine freedom of thought, which had prevailed in Italy under Lorenzo and Leo, in Germany under Maximilian, and had thence extended their beneficial influence over all Europe, were now no longer to be thought of. The very existence of the state was above all things to be saved and guaranteed, whatever else might perish, whatever sacrifices might be required, great and bloody as they might be, painful to the feelings, or injurious to civilization. This was the case not only within the domains of the ancient church, but equally so in those of the new creed. It was not less dangerous in Protestant Germany to swerve from the Augsburg confession of faith, than in Catholic Europe to attack the Council of Trent. Even in Saxony, the cradle of the Reformation, a learned scholar was subjected to a criminal prosecution in the year 1574 for Crypto-Calvinism, as it is called, that is, under the accusation of being a secret adherent of Calvin's party; and a distinguished statesman and chancellor was in the year 1601, on the like account, publicly beheaded. Not only freedom of thought, but civil liberty also, suffered much in many states of Europe, and especially in Germany, from the religious schism. In this country the revolt of the peasants and the discontent of the nobles were the pretext; the power of the princes, so augmented by the confiscation of church property, and their own close alliance with each other, was the cause of these numerous restrictions upon ancient freedom. In the Spanish monarchy the exasperation of the government was stimulated, and its system of policy became even more and more distrustful and harsher, the less it was in a condition to suppress in every quarter the popular insurrections. It is true that these growing encroachments on liberty were the very cause of violent reactions, and thus served to introduce a republican spirit and freedom. It is true that in some states the strife of warring elements settled at last into an equilibrium, which endured for some considerable time at least. This was eminently the case in Holland and in England, where this equilibrium was brought about by an artificial combination of ancient forms with the modern spirit,

while in Austria this was the result of conciliation towards the new order of things, united with the strict maintenance of the ancient system. In the history of Europe, taken as a whole (and England forms not always an exception), this alternation of vigorous repression and equally violent outbreaks of freedom prevailed both in political institutions and in the development of the public mind. We may well ask, however, whether a perpetual transition from one extreme to another—a perpetual oscillation and alternation between despotism and utter anarchy—between hatred against all philosophy on the one side, and contempt for all religion on the other, exhibited in the constitution as well as in modes of thought, can lead so surely to a really well-ordered and lasting freedom and civilization, as that uniform inward development of the earlier times? For such there was in the period preceding the Reformation a noble foundation laid for intellectual culture, and there existed the possibility at least of a fortunate and legal settlement of political relations in all the different states of Europe.

The character of modern nations and states within the last three centuries has been, if not exclusively, yet chiefly moulded by the form which the Reformation assumed, and the influence it exercised in each of them. Of the principal countries of Europe, Italy was indisputably the most fortunate in the first century after the Reformation, precisely because she remained free from its influence (except the remote and mediate impression created by the universal change), and was spared all intestine religious wars. The public peace there required no further sacrifice than perhaps the prosecution or exile of one or two scholars, whose mode of thinking, and whose doctrines might now appear dangerous to the public security, although in other times perhaps they would have augmented and exalted the fame of Italy. As Italy and Spain had preserved their national unity, they alone at this period possessed a true national intellectual culture, and a literature, that was the reflection of it. But unfortunately, from a dread of abuse and of doctrinal innovations, philosophy was excluded from this circle of intellectual culture, or reduced to a dead, powerless form, for literature was altogether too much restricted to the regions of imagination. Hence this Italian and Spanish civilization, brilliant

as it was in art, poetry, and literature, bore within itself the germ of weakness and decay; for a true and lasting cultivation can alone proceed from the harmonious development of all our faculties. In England and Germany, through recollections of other times and old traditions, many isolated flowers of northern poesy still sprang up on the national soil, even in this century; but a regular series of intellectual works—a body of national literature, as in Spain and Italy—could not there grow up. The storm of civil war swept away into oblivion every plant that strove to put forth its leaves. In Germany the very language became barbarous, when after a whole century of religious controversies, invariably carried on with bitterness, often with coarseness, generally with a false subtlety, and but rarely with originality and profoundness of intellect, there ensued a universal and desolating war, whereof many survived the termination, in manhood or old age, who had witnessed its commencement in childhood or youth. In France, too, all interest and energy were at that period exclusively absorbed by civil commotions and party contests. It was not until Richelieu re-established unity, that the era of the *Belles Lettres* commenced in France, which that statesman was at first anxious to encourage for political purposes. After Italy, the condition of Germany was comparatively the most prosperous in the latter half of the sixteenth century, from the period of the religious peace until the eve of the outbreak of the thirty years' war. It was but a false peace, indeed, which, far from eradicating the evil, did not even fix accurately the demarcations between the hostile parties. Such as it was, however, it was still a benefit, compared with the horrors perpetrated in that age in France and England. For the advantage of being the first to establish a religious peace, Germany was indebted more immediately to Charles the Fifth's efforts to effect a reunion, and to the milder sentiments, or at least to the early suggestion of terms and conditions of agreement, which thence arose. The causes that tended to uphold a peace, so frail and insecure in its own nature, were the fact that both religious parties in Germany, if not equally strong, were at least sufficiently powerful to inspire mutual fear and forbearance; next, the pacific and conciliatory system of the first Austrian emperors of the German line, who succeeded Charles the Fifth; and, finally, the

systematic aversion which, since the atrocities of the peasants' war, and of the Anabaptists, the German Lutherans entertained for all civil commotions, unlawful encroachments, or violent revolutions in the old constitution. The followers of Calvin, on the other hand, whose genius and principles bore more directly on the state, on social relations and changes, were excluded from the benefits of the religious peace, were abhorred even by the Lutherans, and thus could only with difficulty and by degrees obtain toleration; for a long period elapsed ere they acquired any influence in Germany. It was quite otherwise in France and England: instead of parties being tolerably equal, as in Germany. in the former of those two countries the Catholic, in the latter the Protestant party, were predominant, and preponderant enough to be able to exercise at their will oppression over the weaker body. In both lands, conspiracies were the order of the day. In England, the executions of many worthy and innocent persons, from Sir Thomas More down to the unhappy Mary Queen of Scots, excite an indignation even aggravated by the legal form given to the perpetrated cruelty. Not less are we disgusted with the violent changes of principles and creed bloodily enforced according to the successive opinions of despotic sovereigns. In France the party contests at the court of the last Valois, and in general their culpable intrigues, which involved all that was most sacred in religion, the dearest interests, and the very blood of the people, are especially revolting to the feelings. How powerful and destructive the new elements of fermentation were, that the new doctrines had introduced into the world, was evinced more especially in England. Almost still more violent and bloody than the hatred between the adherents of the old and the new faith, was the hatred between the two parties, into which the latter was divided, namely, the Protestant Episcopalians and the Puritans. In this respect England most resembled Germany, except that in the former the evil was fully developed, whereas in the latter the germ only existed. Had the Catholic party been wholly crushed in Germany,—could the Calvinist doctrines have obtained a somewhat wider diffusion, judging from their mutual sentiments and mutual exasperation, a civil war between the followers of Luther and of Calvin would probably have broken out in this country also.

In the Spanish monarchy the new doctrines evinced their influence in bringing about a democratic reaction in the dangerous shape of great popular insurrections. The Dutch achieved their freedom by force of arms; the Moriscoes in the south of Spain were defeated and extirpated. A third great rebellion, though purely political, in Arragon, under Philip the Second, proves how a despotic government is hardened in its course of severity by the very insurrections it provokes. Another consequence of the Reformation was, that the states and nations of Europe grew more isolated, that the universal bond of union, which had hitherto enfolded and knit them together, became relaxed, or was even altogether dis severed. Germany had much declined from its ancient greatness, and was mostly confined within the circle of its own affairs. England and France were wholly absorbed with their own affairs, and with their civil wars. Spain alone continued to maintain her ascendancy in Italy, and to divide with Portugal the almost exclusive monopoly of commerce, and of the recently discovered countries of the new world. At times she possessed a visible preponderance over France and England, and exerted a kind of predominating influence through all western Europe, until more clear-sighted observers perceived that Spanish greatness, the glory and lustre whereof had, from the time of Charles the Fifth, been diffused through all Europe, was no longer what it had been, what it was still considered to be by the multitude, but that the great monarchy was in a state of visible and hopeless decline.

Before we review the reign of Philip the Second, the son and successor of the great Charles, who was yet so unlike his father, and trace the further destinies of the Spanish, and the principles of the German-Austrian house, we have still something to say as to Charles's views and principles regarding his house and line—the Austrian dynasty in Spain, as well as in Germany. One of his last plans, as is well known, was to procure Philip's election as king of the Romans. Not one of Charles's measures appears so liable to censure as this, if we form our judgment according to the result instead of the intention of the emperor, and require of him an absolute foreknowledge of his son's character, such as we judge it to be, after it has been unfolded to posterity by a



reign of forty-two years, a period during which it became even sterner and darker. Startling, it is true, is the idea of what would have become of Europe, had Mary of England, Philip the Second's consort, lived longer, had his marriage proved prolific, had he become virtual sovereign of England through long possession of a co-regency, and already king of Spain and Naples and lord of the new world, had he now in addition been created emperor of Germany. But from his personal character alone would the danger have arisen, not from the union of these various kingdoms, which, from their unalterable differences and geographical remoteness, would rather have afforded each other some mutual guarantees of freedom. Thus in Italy, although restrained by no foreign power, Philip could not acquire despotic sway. Still less could he have done so in England, even if the prolongation of Mary's life and the then strength of the Catholic party had enabled him to maintain himself in that country, not even if he had known how to win the good-will of the people. In Spain, had he been simultaneously emperor of Germany, he would, beyond all doubt, have been a less absolute sovereign than he actually was. Least of all could he ever have attained absolute power in Germany. Here, above all, he would have been forced to adopt more conciliatory principles; or if he had remained inflexible in his severity, the only result would have been that the war, which, as it was, subsequently broke out, would have been earlier enkindled, and half a century sooner, perhaps, have been concluded by a Westphalian peace. A total subjugation of either party by the other was not to be apprehended, as for that end, both of them were too powerful. Very different from the union of such different countries, and far more pregnant with danger, is that order of things, when a great state, shut up in itself, and with frontiers well rounded off, is encompassed by neighbours, each of whom, taken singly, is far inferior to it in power. In such a case, opportunities for systematic aggrandizement, in the course of time, will never be wanting; while the aggrandizement of such a state is never effected on the federal principle of a mere connection, but by the incorporation of the smaller with the ruling country, by the fusion of all into one universal mass, with whose expansion despotism at home must necessarily increase, and

grow unlimited. Be this, however, as it may, and far happier and more desirable for Germany as were the mild principles of government adopted by the first emperors of the Austro-German line, than the event adverted to above ; yet the idea of uniting so many crowns on a single head, of fusing all states and nations into a single state and nation, was so remote from Charles's views, that we may be certain that if had had a second legitimate son, he would, in all probability, have set apart one of the crowns he wore, that of Naples or the Netherlands for instance, as an inheritance for him. This is shown, likewise, in his fraternal relations with Ferdinand. It was not mistrust or dislike towards his brother that suggested to Charles this arrangement ; but wholly and solely the natural reflection, how difficult, nay, impossible, it would be for him, with the slender power he otherwise possessed, to maintain the imperial rights, and fulfil imperial duties with vigour and efficiency. The best clue to the views, on which Charles's plans were founded, is furnished by the nature of the arrangement which the two brothers at last appear to have agreed upon. Philip was to become king of the Romans, and then to succeed Ferdinand in the imperial dignity ; while Maximilian, Ferdinand's son, was, in his turn, as king of the Romans, to lend his aid to Philip, as his father had so often done as Charles's representative in Germany. The universal opposition which this proposal excited in Germany was natural, on account of the character of Philip, who was not even then popular ; more unfounded was the objection of its being an attempt to render the empire hereditary. In the most flourishing periods of the Germanic constitution, in the times of the Saxon, Franconian, and Suabian emperors, it had been the custom not to quit the reigning house without some urgent motive ; while the freedom of election was vindicated by the preference of one member to another of the same house and family. Subsequently the German princes themselves, although some of them, at least, were at variance or even at war with the house of Austria, felt, that to adhere to that house, to introduce a kind of hereditary principle, not in theory indeed, but, nevertheless, in practice, was the only means of preserving some degree of power to the enfeebled imperial authority. This arrangement, for the sake of internal order, as well as protection against the

Turks, must have been desired by all, and acknowledged as a benefit.

According to the conception of Charles, not only was the imperial dignity to be common to the two branches of his house, but they were in general to be united in the most intimate manner. The whole Austrian house was to form a single family, and the various Austrian states and nations a single federative state, precisely as Ferdinand and himself, although reigning over countries widely apart, yet formed together, both in peace and war, only one power, one Austrian federative state. Several like measures reveal this his plan, as well as the wish for a general union of the Austrian family, and a close connection between the two lines. During his last absence from Spain he appointed Maximilian, who had married Philip's sister, regent; and Maximilian on this occasion gained the universal love of the Spanish nation. To him and to his consort the emperor intrusted the education of his beloved grandson, the unhappy Carlos. The mind and temper of Charles ought to have been hereditary in his house, in order to realize the union he had so much at heart. Little, however, as the good emperor had succeeded in Germany in restoring concord, and in reuniting minds inflamed and embittered by hatred, he succeeded no better in preserving the alliance and union he desired among his posterity. From the hateful character of Philip, the very means he had selected to connect the two lines became an occasion for the greater estrangement, which after his death sprang up between them, and which was long ere it was removed. If the failure of the proposed election of Philip as king of the Romans did not produce any coolness between the two brothers themselves, it undoubtedly created a decided alienation and aversion between Philip and Ferdinand. The circumstance of Maximilian's gaining so completely the love of the Spaniards as regent may easily, added to the great difference in their modes of thinking and to Philip's disposition, have increased still more their mutual dislike. Without doubt the freer principles imbibed by the youthful Carlos, in his education under Maximilian, joined to the undisciplined and fiery character of the young prince, and the stern, suspicious temper of Philip, were the first occasion for the discord between the father and the son, and for the unhappy fate of Carlos.

Irrevocably as history has pronounced judgment on Philip the Second, yet in forming our estimate of his character, we must not forget that, like the Roman emperor Tiberius, with whom in his suspicious and vindictive character he may be perhaps compared, he possessed also, together with these defects, many great qualities, a profound understanding, and a full degree of energy and activity. Neither was his character at first by any means what it afterwards gradually became, as his disposition grew ever sterner and harder. It is the worst quality of a stern, mistrustful, vindictive character, that the evil strikes its roots deeper with time. Philip's despotic principles, indeed, originated in the conviction, that as his father had encountered universal censure for excessive mildness and indulgence, especially with regard to religious matters, he ought to correct the error. As often happens in such cases, he fell into the opposite extreme of excessive rigour. In many cases and positions it is only the most decided, only extreme measures, that can bring help and safety; but these measures are of dangerous application, for there resides in them a power, which will often master the hand that attempts to guide them. These decided and extreme measures, which in execution so easily degenerate into cruelty, whether they proceed from the principle of monarchical sovereignty or from ideas of democratic freedom, have this peculiarity, that they cannot be revoked. If cruelty be once excited and enforced, it then hurries forward in its course as an independent power; and at last it depends no longer on the tyrant himself, whether he wishes to continue a tyrant or not, but he is driven onwards in his course by an iron destiny, as it were, and by an invisible hand.

Brilliant was the first epoch of Philip the Second's reign. The war against France, to which the latter was urged by Rome itself, out of hatred to Charles's conciliatory policy, and his supposed interference in religious matters, was as glorious and successful as ever a war had been. The naval power of Turkey was shattered at a moment, when the results of the rebellion in the Low Countries could not as yet be anticipated. Philip had inherited two great qualities from his father: a dignified and lofty outward bearing, and the art of collecting great men around him, of appreciating, honouring, and employing them. From the time of Charles,

the Spanish name was still great throughout Europe, and the weight of this glory in public estimation was very considerable. Everything undertaken by Spain at this period bore a certain stamp of dignity and grandeur. For the perpetuation of this its ancient lustre, the monarchy was chiefly indebted to the Spanish nobility, which through Charles had risen to be the first in Europe. To distinguish this new form of nobility from the older forms and epochs, in which that order had been developed in the middle age from the Germanic period, we may term it the royal nobility; for a spirit of unbounded devotion, fidelity, and self-sacrifice in the service of the king, was its soul and first principle. The feudal nobility had sprung out of companionship in arms. The rewards at first bestowed and received only in the spirit of magnanimity and lofty gratitude, quickly introduced self-interest in the place of enthusiastic love of glory and a disinterested brotherhood in arms. With self-interest arose a multitude of complicated relations of property, thwarting and embarrassing the state in every way.

The nobility of the middle age was afterwards purified anew, and regenerated by the spirit of chivalry. Instead of self-interest, their minds were turned towards high objects of public welfare, and the fraternal love of noble brothers in arms and comrades in war was still more closely cemented by solemn vows and lofty sentiments. Chivalry, however, remained incomplete; it never became universally predominant, and in the anarchy which arose upon the disorganization of the great old political institutions, the nobility assumed the worst of all forms, became one of violent feud and fierce club-law. The nobility were in part deprived of and deposed from their original military duties, when, besides the mounted nobles, who had hitherto constituted the chief sinew of war, an invincible infantry was formed out of a robust and free race of mountaineers. The Swiss and the German foot-soldiers soon became universally indispensable in every army; the armed militia of the independent cities, however, easily became the most dexterous in the scientific construction and employment of fire-arms. The feuds carried on by the nobles in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries against the freedom-loving peasantry and against the cities, was the struggle of a newly-invented military system against the old one; a struggle in

which the new maintained its ground. The exclusive possession of military service and military honour could no longer form the essential characteristic of the nobility; the complicated relations of feudal property disappeared more and more with the extension of the royal power. But by means of this very royal power, which now first received its full development, a perfectly new function devolved upon the nobility, that, namely, of constituting a link between king and people. Not as though the king, if he is what he ought to be, the living centre of his people, needs a prop for his support, nor that the nobility should co-operate and share in any efforts to establish absolute authority to crush the liberties of the people; but that they should complete the union of the body politic, should knit together more intimately the living bonds between king and people. In its original idea, what else is the king amid his people but the living law, the visible justice? A nobility that thinks and acts in this moral spirit, that multiplies as it were this kingly power of legal order and moral dignity; that places its honour in its self-devotion to royalty, in the principles of rigid justice and morality, in the glory and lustre of the nation; such a nobility corresponds to the lofty idea formed by Charles of the functions of the order. We may affirm that by the influence of his spirit, and by the moral dignity of the nation itself, the Spanish nobility of that age corresponded better to this lofty standard, and approached nearer to the beau ideal than any other in Europe.

Of the great men whom Philip inherited from his father, Alba holds the first place. His character, likewise, which, during his long career, may be distinguished into three quite distinct epochs, is often unfairly judged merely from its last and least favourable period. A faithful friend and servant of the great Charles, than whom he was eight years younger, Alba attained even in early youth a high degree of glory. Love, chivalrous sports, and poetry,—which seemed in the eyes of every noble Spaniard of that age the main purpose of life,—martial deeds and martial fame, filled up Alba's youth also; he was accounted the pride of the Spanish nobility; he was the model of all aspiring youths, and the darling of his nation. It awakes a melancholy feeling to compare this beautiful picture of Alba's youth with the cruelties which, in his old age, he perpetrated in the Netherlands;

to contemplate the frightful effects and changes that half a century passed amid civil turmoils and religious wars may produce even in a character originally noble. In Germany, at the middle period of his life, when he stood a consummate captain at the side of Charles, so far was he from being what he is generally painted, that the counsels and warnings he gave to Charles, especially with regard to the elector John Frederick, were wholly on the side of mercy; they were, moreover, in general very wise, and exhibited an accurate knowledge of the circumstances of the German states and princes. The dignity of the house of Austria; the maintenance of the Catholic religion; the honour of Spain—these were the objects of his life, these alone possessed value in his eyes; for these, as a warrior and a statesman, he battled with enthusiasm, and for these he himself was also ready to make every sacrifice. His cruelty in the Netherlands is undeniable. He was convinced, however, of the absolute justice of his cause, and that extreme and violent measures would alone be effectual—an opinion which he held in common with many whose lives have been cast in the unhappy period of civil warfare. He received, moreover, invariably from Philip, who sought to cast the odium from himself on Alba, stringent orders to act with severity. Thus, if we do not deny all great qualities to a Sylla, a Pompey, and Cicero, a Cato, and Brutus, because partly out of passion, partly upon principle, and for the sake of opinions, they spilled the blood of their countrymen, or took part in acts of this kind, neither can we exclude Alba from the ranks of great men.

The revolt of the Netherlands, and the independence they subsequently achieved by force of arms, was in its results one of the most important events of history. If we examine one by one the first demands and proceedings of the malcontents, we shall not find them all well-founded or just, nor will their chiefs and leaders, judged by their separate and secret views, appear by any means in the favourable light in which the glory of the successful result and the gratitude of posterity have placed them. But if we look at the whole course and spirit of Philip the Second's government, we can only regard popular insurrections as natural. The desire expressed by a considerable party in the Netherlands to place themselves under the sovereignty of an Austrian archduke of the German line

suggests the idea that it would perhaps have been more fortunate if Charles the Fifth had allotted his Netherlands to the German line. From the tolerant principles of the earlier emperors of that house, the ensuing war would probably have been avoided, and Holland never have become a separate state, an occurrence which has subsequently been attended with the most important and beneficial results, and often exercised a most decided influence on the whole course of events. The revolt of the Netherlands and the conquest of Portugal were the most important events in Philip the Second's reign. With Sebastian's death terminated the brief period of Portuguese prosperity, power, and grandeur. A grandson of Charles the Fifth, not less unhappy than his other grandson, Don Carlos of Spain, he appears to have chiefly been stimulated to undertake his great African expedition by the glorious example of his grandfather. In itself the expedition cannot be called absurd. Already Ximenes and Charles the Fifth were persuaded, that nothing was so important and so essential to the internal prosperity of the Iberian peninsula, and would so continue in the future, as a lasting influence and permanent possessions on the African coast. Under the protection of such settlements, flourishing Christian colonies might perhaps have been gradually there planted, and that maritime coast, which is so essentially connected with Europe, have become peopled, as of old, by civilized nations, and remained intimately united with Spain. Hitherto these hostile provinces of Africa had often brought ruin upon the southern countries of Europe and opposed an insuperable obstacle to their attaining any high degree of prosperity. Had Sebastian's enterprise succeeded, he would have been ranked among the greatest heroes and conquerors: the world judges generally by the result. The enthusiastic love of his people, manifested not only after his misfortunes, and on account of the unhappy state of affairs that ensued, but prior to them likewise, speaks favourably for Sebastian. He had succeeded in exciting the enthusiasm of the entire nation for himself and his undertaking, and this success implies no mean capacity. As Sebastian, however, intoxicated with the love of glory so natural to youth, staked, so to say, the whole power of the nation upon a single throw, and lost the hazardous game, the unhappy consequence ensued, that together with the



prince the nation also perished. Alba warned him kindly and zealously; his uncle Philip the Second dismissed him coldly and with vague expressions. The latter now made himself master of Portugal, and thereby apparently augmented his power, but in reality, by the unjust conquest, paved the way for the downfall of Spain. For it was precisely this seizure of Portugal, accomplished as it was by violence, and against the conviction and inclinations of the bulk of the Portuguese, and which of itself speedily occasioned a new revolution, that gave the Dutch the opportunity of becoming a great naval power by appropriating to themselves a large portion of the Portuguese commerce and Portuguese possessions in India. How different in this matter were the views and conduct of Philip from those of his father Charles! With what solicitude did Charles establish and invariably uphold the amicable relations between the two nations and states! It would have been no difficult matter for an ambitious king of Spain to take possession of Portugal, which by land was so much feebler. Even in the reign of Isabella, the old border-hatred had been succeeded by a spirit of lasting concord, and to this happy state of things the celebrated partition-line, by which the pope divided the new world between the two rival nations, had not a little contributed. As the last important act of power exerted by the popes as umpires between the different nations, this judgment merits a place in history, and has also been often made a topic of ridicule. We may readily acknowledge that the new world belonged to the pope as little as the ocean; but if without that partition-line, a war (and as is usual among all nations stimulated by commercial jealousy), a desolating war had been unavoidable between the Spaniards and the Portuguese, its effect will at least have been beneficial. In many of the commercial and naval wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, how happy would it have been, had a power still subsisted, which, without any other force than that of conviction, possessed sufficient authority to draw a line of peace like this upon the globe. The unity and the consolidation into a single state of the Iberian peninsula may in itself appear natural and desirable! The wisdom of Isabella and Charles prepared the way for such an event by the mild means of family alliance and family concord, whereby in the course of time it would of itself

have naturally ensued. Philip's precipitate and violent conquest produced exactly the opposite effect,—insurrection, namely, and a permanent separation. With Sebastian the energy of the nation was totally prostrated. Whether of the several pretended Sebastians, the last, who first appeared in Venice and who terminated his life in a Spanish prison, were not the real one, remains still doubtful. If he were, the number of Philip's secret acts of cruelty towards his own family would be thereby increased.

It is remarkable that, in the latter years of his life, according to the testimony and the detailed narratives of the Spanish historians, a fearful remorse agitated and afflicted the aged Philip. No conception of his character would be more incorrect, than to suppose him a mere selfish tyrant, without feeling, and even perhaps without personal belief. Repentance, like his, proves that the memory of lofty ideas was not extinguished in his breast. Less certain is the subject to which this repentance more specially referred. It would scarcely refer to what posterity chiefly regards as the great error and crime of Philip—namely, his hostility to freedom, and his cruelty in religious matters. On these points his convictions were too strong to be shaken. He, perhaps, considered those errors the most criminal, which he always strove so anxiously to conceal, and for which posterity would have soonest forgiven him, had he otherwise corresponded to the wishes of mankind. Or was it some of those secret acts he committed, or allowed in his own family, in his immediate household? Was it the spirits of the unhappy Carlos, of Don Juan, perhaps also of Sebastian, that now appeared to him?

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In the period immediately succeeding the death of Charles the Fifth, it seemed as though not only the states and nations, which had composed the hitherto united power of Austria, had been partitioned between the two lines of his house, but as though his sentiments and qualities had been likewise divided and portioned out between them. Each of them, Spanish as well as German Austria, understood but one side of his comprehensive policy, and made it the standard of their acts. Charles had evinced alike inexhaustible patience and pliancy, while any hope of peace was left, and unshaken heroism when struggle and war were

unavoidable. The princes of Spanish Austria retained exclusively that firm devotion towards the ancient faith and the ancient constitution, which filled the soul of Charles, and which he could only satisfy in Spain; but they carried their severity far beyond the bounds which the temperate spirit of Charles could sanction.\*

Those of German Austria, on the other hand, followed the precedent of Charles's tolerant policy in Germany. They pushed toleration and concession towards the new doctrines even further, until they brought matters to such a pass, that to avert the downfall of their house, as well as of their hereditary states, and to set at least one firm barrier against the headlong torrent of a fierce revolutionary opinion, there was needed the almost marvellous heroism of an emperor, swayed by principles totally different, and of unwavering resolve.

This excessive spirit of conciliation on the part of the first Austro-German emperors, who immediately succeeded Charles, was one, but not the exclusive, cause of the thirty years' war. Germany drew all Europe more or less into this war; and after a brief period of delusive internal tranquillity, and evident impotence in external relations, vindicated its ancient rank of being the country, on whose state and destiny, more or less, depend, and ever will depend, the state and destiny of all the other countries and nations of Europe.

But ere I enter into any reflections on this great conflict, wherewith a new epoch in the world's history begins, it is necessary to cast a glance at the earlier civil and religious wars of other countries, and on the state of Europe at the period when Spanish power, separated from Austria, exerted considerable influence over all western countries, although it soon betrayed unequivocal symptoms of its approaching downfall.

As it was in England and France that, from the very outset, the new religious party mostly acquired a political tendency; so likewise did it preserve that character the longest in those countries, and even down to the struggles of our own times. These struggles must be traced to the wars and parties of the Reformation, as to their first source, whenever we wish to explain the course of events by the light of the past. I have characterized the persecution of the Protestants under Lewis the Fourteenth as the last great event in the series of religious troubles, civil wars, popular insurrections,

and acts of oppression, that sprang out of the Reformation. I do so, because, since that period, and especially since the alliance between England and Austria in the time of Queen Anne, Prince Eugene, and the emperor Joseph the First, and through that very alliance, to which, indeed, more than to any other cause, Europe is indebted for the benefit of general religious toleration, more tolerant principles have, on the whole at least, predominated in Europe, and public opinion has ever more and more recognised them to be the best. It is only, however, in respect to the gradual diffusion and to the prevalence of these better principles, only in respect to the predominant public opinion, that this epoch can be considered as the termination of religious wars; for if we look to individual events, to the exceptions which have subsequently occurred, it would be superfluous to call to mind how grave have been the commotions and troubles excited, even in very recent times, in Great Britain, and especially in Ireland, by the suffering condition of the Catholics. The Reformation, and the peculiar form it assumed in each country, has been the ruling element of power in modern history, exceeding that of the commerce with India and America, so that even the peculiar relations between England and her American colonies have been chiefly formed by this event, and the independence of the latter been prepared by it. The most violent Protestant sects, or those at least which dissented from the church established in the mother country, always furnished the majority of those emigrants from home, where the state was often glad enough to be disburthened in so quiet a way of such perilous and inflammable matter. Hence these sects acquired a decided preponderance in the population and in the national spirit of the colonies. In the lapse of time, it is true, circumstances became so very complicated, so infinitely varied, that it were too broad a proposition to lay down,—that Great Britain was a Protestant kingdom, based on the principles of the moderate Protestants, who had retained the episcopal hierarchy and the ancient parliamentary constitution, while British America was a Puritan republic. We shall, however, be never able satisfactorily to explain the fundamental principles of the British and the North American constitutions, the great difference in the national spirit of the British and the American people,

without going back to their primal sources—the Reformation, and the wars and parties which issued from it. As in the period of these first troubles, the strife and hatred between the two parties into which the new religionists were divided—between the moderate and the rigid Protestants—between the sects which supported episcopal and royal authority, and those which were more favourable to freedom and equality, were well-nigh more fierce and more embittered than between the adherents of the ancient and the new faith: so likewise in France was the contest between the rigid and the moderate Catholics, the Guises and their opponents, not less ardent.

In England, as we easily perceive, those two ancient parties—the Republican Protestants and those favourable to episcopal and royal authority—the Puritans and the Episcopalians, prevail even to our own days, only under the altered names of Whigs and Tories. In France, however, in the room of the moderate and zealous Catholics, who contended and waged war so vehemently against each other, a contest was substituted, with some modification of the object of dispute, between two parties, which also were both Catholics; the contest, namely, between the Jansenists and the Jesuits. This dispute, which exerted so decisive an influence on the destinies of France, was prolonged till about the period when the harbingers of the last revolution in all things were already visible. Thus, although under altered names, have the civil wars which arose in France and England out of the religious schism been protracted, even down to the most recent times, with vehement animosity, and with the most important consequences as regards the state and the nation itself. Nay, the elements of discord have not been, even in our own day, really composed. Very different, however, was the influence which the Reformation exercised in Spain, and the course which it took in Germany. In England and in France, the weaker party in the former country, namely the Catholics on the one hand and the Puritans on the other, in the latter the Protestants, was indeed weak enough to be subdued and persecuted, but, nevertheless, powerful enough to resist by dangerous reaction any attempt at extirpation. In Spain and Germany, on the contrary, peace was established, although by different means. In Spain it was brought about

by wholly crushing and destroying the influence of the Reformation, the only province in which this was not accomplished being severed from the monarchy. The excessive severity to which the government had recourse, in consequence of repeated popular insurrections, and which again tended only to confirm its policy, sowed the germ of that apathy, that moral death, that bereaved the religious peace and unity obtained and preserved in that country of all internal vital strength, although concealed at first by an illusive show of external glory. In Germany peace was established, not as in Spain, by the victory of the one party over the other, but merely by the equality in power of both parties—by the impossibility of the one entirely conquering the other. This equality of strength in the Catholic and the Protestant parties in Germany tended to postpone the contest, which, however, for that reason, when at last it did break out, was only the more fearful and protracted. Hence, the peace that ensued, resulted only from the exhaustion of the belligerent powers, and settled no differences except by the mutual conviction that it was impossible for the one party to subdue the other, by the consequent recognition of a mutual *statu quo*, and by a fixed, precise, and permanent demarcation between the two parties. Spain had purchased her peace and unity by the sacrifice of her freedom. The peace that Germany obtained at the end of her religious wars was, with regard to external relations, but a state of permanent disunion. The sentiments and passions—the offspring of religious discord—which in France and England were still so fiercely displayed, were here extinguished, from the sense of the impossibility of success felt by both parties. The ferment which continued in those countries ceased in Germany, peace was restored to the public mind. So it appeared to be at least, and it might perhaps have really become so. What actually ensued, however, was not a true unity, but an indifference, which, with a constitution that did not bind the conflicting members and powers together, but merely kept them asunder by means of an exact balance of power, necessarily led sooner or later to a total disorganization of the body politic. Luther's appearance at the Diet of Worms was the primary cause that was necessarily to bring about in the course of time the dissolution of the German empire, and the division of the German nation.

I named the parties engaged in the sanguinary contests in England and France, moderate and rigid Protestants, moderate and zealous Catholics. This, however, requires an explanation; for the epithet *moderate* has been selected merely for the sake of distinguishing one party from the other, and is not to be understood in a strict sense. The adherents of the Anglican church on many points undoubtedly approximated more than the Puritans to Catholic doctrines; they were even often reproached and were hated by the latter for this very approximation, and so far they may be called moderate. The mode, however, in which they often carried into practice their theories on the absolute power of kings displayed as little moderation as their proceedings against weaker parties. Still less does that Catholic party in France, which was opposed to the strict Catholics, merit the praise of true moderation. It was the court party, and under the last kings of the house of Valois, this party, it is true, was strongly disposed to enter into an alliance with the Protestants, a proceeding utterly condemned by the zealous party of the Guises. But such an alliance sprang not out of a genuine love of peace, nor from any principle of religious toleration, but was solely the fruit of that immoral policy, which considers religion as a mere tool, and the most fearful and universal agitation only as a field for playing off a game of selfish politics. The blind zeal of those who, in behalf of one or the other creed, acted with passion or systematic harshness and severity, was far less the occasion of general bloodshed or individual crime, than that frightful levity and spirit of intrigue, which trifled with the faith and the passions of the people. Our moral judgment can scarcely avoid giving the preference to the Guises, when we compare their conduct with the unbounded degeneracy of the court in the reigns of the last Valois. In despite of their great qualities and settled principles, the Guises were yet dangerous to France, because, strict Catholics as they were, they likewise in their struggles for the crown constituted a Spanish party. Thus had the mighty kingdom of France, which under Francis the First was able to cope with the power of Charles the Fifth, been reduced by internal discord to such a pitch of degradation, that a foreign party, a Spanish party, existed within its bosom; and more than once the moment appeared at hand,

when France was to fall utterly under Spanish influence, and to become a Spanish dependency.

In England as well as in France, religious divisions and partisanship had reached the throne, and the reigning dynasty as well as the people. In contemplating the history of the Tudors and the Stuarts, we would almost think that certain qualities, that a definite character, could be hereditary in families, and remain unchanged in them, for several generations together. We see all these Tudors, who reigned for a period sufficiently long to enable them to unfold and display their principles, aim unceasingly at one and the same object,—unlimited despotism. This was even the case with Henry the Seventh, as observant historians have not failed to remark. In Henry the Eighth this disposition was manifested with the most undisguised cruelty. His daughter Elizabeth had in reality inherited the sentiments of her father, though her external deportment was more composed. Cold and impenetrably reserved, as skilled in dissimulation as William of Orange, she resembled him also in unwearied pertinacity, directed to the attainment of one object. By this one quality she accomplished much not only for the Protestant cause, but for England itself; and on this account so much praise has been lavished upon her. If, however, we direct our chief attention to her personal character, such as history really reveals it, her heart will scarcely appear in a more favourable light than that of her powerful antagonist, Philip the Second. To the wars which the latter carried on against her, not only religious differences, but also personal animosity, may have somewhat contributed. When Philip the Second was in England with his consort Queen Mary, Elizabeth, in consequence of the troubles which preceded the accession of Mary to the English throne, was in confinement, and was indebted to Philip's intercession alone for her liberty and the preservation of her life. This circumstance Philip could scarcely have forgotten, when Elizabeth, by supporting the insurgent Netherlanders, inflicted subsequently so much disgrace and injury upon him. That he aimed at the conquest of England by his celebrated armada, which was scattered by the tempest, is hardly credible; the right of the Stuarts to the throne was too apparent, and it was precisely the idea of rescuing the unhappy Mary, who was suffering for the sake of her reli-



gion, that excited the enthusiasm of the Spaniards, and rendered the war popular with the nation. Had the result been successful, a general rising of the Catholics may have undoubtedly been possible. Such an event might have cost Elizabeth the crown; and in that case, if the Stuarts had succeeded her, Spanish influence would have been great, and strongly felt in England. From the unfortunate Mary down to Queen Anne, the last of this dynasty who reigned in England, we find almost all the Stuarts endowed with intellect, knowledge, imagination, refinement, and amiable qualities in abundant measure. The coldness, the measured reserve, the perseverance, and sagacity of the Tudors, however, were, often to the detriment of their fortunes, wanting to the Stuarts. With these qualities and manners, even had several members of the Stuart family had less leaning towards the Catholic creed, the sentiments of the rigid Protestant party in England would have been little congenial. Influenced by such predilections, and by earlier family ties, they formed foreign connections; at first allied themselves with Spain, and subsequently fell under the influence of France; and these foreign connections it was that, as in the case of the French Guises, led to their downfall. In France, as well as in England, the feeling of national unity was ever so strong, that any, often perhaps only apparent, violation of it was severely punished. It was only in Germany that, from the time of Maurice of Saxony, parties and party leaders could with impunity be under foreign influence.

In France, after the termination of the civil wars, Henry the Fourth appeared to promise a new golden age. Besides all his military qualities, his genius, and his personal amiability, he had learned, in the long strife of parties, and reared as he had been far from the throne, and without any hopes of succeeding to it, to accommodate himself to circumstances, and to bind the minds of others precisely as his own views required. With all his natural openness he had much worldly wisdom, and won hearts as much by what he seemed to be, as what he really was. Before him the times had been fearful, and after his death the nation found cause enough to wish him once more among them; this must have heightened the lustre of his qualities, loved and admired as he was by his people. All, moreover, that was accomplished, desired,

or planned by Sully was attributed by posterity (and in part with reason) to Henry, and made his brief history still more glorious and important.

His political sentiments and principles in respect to Europe in general were only distinguishable by a better outward seeming, and not in their essence, from those of the other kings of France. What chiefly claims our attention in this respect is his idea of a universal Christian republic, in which Europe was to have been divided into several hereditary and elective kingdoms and free states, and the contests between the respective powers were to have been decided by a general European parliament, pretty much as all internal disputes in the Germanic empire were composed by the imperial diet and imperial tribunals of Germany.

We may easily suppose that France was not forgotten in this scheme, and, if the whole of it had been realized, was to have presided, and to have enjoyed the suprema influence. This famous plan of a Christian European republic is in the first place only a striking and melancholy proof, how much all the purer ideas and principles of earlier times had been forgotten in the religious wars; how deeply Europe had sunk in political morality, in consequence of these revolutions! The idea of a moral bond of union and an alliance between all Christian states and nations, which had for centuries been the basis of all public relations and proceedings in Germany and Italy, and whose fuller realization had been chiefly prevented by the selfish policy of the kings of France alone, was now presented to the world as nothing less than a French invention, which was only too admirable to be practically enforced, and in lieu whereof other maxims were in the meantime adopted in practice. The plan may, it is true, have been impracticable as to the details, which had already been conceived in idea, because no power as yet existed to dispose of Europe at pleasure. In the features of this picture we discern nothing more than the old schemes of aggrandizement so characteristic of the older French history, as well as a hatred to the house of Austria. A war of France against Spain might perhaps be considered just. Spain had exercised considerable influence over the affairs of France, and possessed numerous adherents in that country. Spain had intermeddled in the internal troubles of France, and hence

the right of retaliation might here at least be alleged. What danger, however, for France was at that time to be apprehended from Germany or Austria? In this quarter not the remotest provocation was given to a just war. Henry could not even use the pretext of seeking to protect religious freedom from oppression in Germany, except perhaps after the fashion of his predecessor Henry the Second, who called himself the protector of German liberty, while for his own profit he was dismembering German cities from the empire. Religious freedom was so far from being oppressed, the power of the two religious parties was so great in Germany, that if there were any preponderance of real power on either side, it lay on that of the Protestants. In Germany, moreover, peace had been already long established between the two parties, and their mutual relations had been developed and defined in a more legal and equitable manner, than had been hitherto the case in France or in any other country of Europe. That Henry did all in his power to destroy this peace, and to introduce a fearful civil war into Germany, can scarcely be justified except upon the principles of that immoral policy, which the kings of France had followed at a still earlier period, when at Paris they caused the Protestants to be executed, while in Germany they stimulated them to wage war against the emperor, and in general used religion and religious wars as a mere game of ambition and an instrument for the furtherance of conquest. More than any other was Henry the secret originator of the thirty years' war; he it was who kindled its fearful flames, and in this respect he acted upon the very principles whereby Richelieu became subsequently the cause of so much suffering in Germany; and had Henry's life been prolonged, he would, moreover, from his brilliant qualities as a general and a monarch, have inflicted infinitely more injury upon Germany than lay in the power of Richelieu.

Holland, a state that was only now beginning to rise, exercised a far more effective influence than Henry the Fourth and his favourite scheme in reviving once more the idea of a Christian European commonwealth, of a system of equitable and moral relations between all the different states and nations of Europe. Holland, although a state of small extent, occupied in the seventeenth and the earlier half of the

eighteenth century a most important position in general history. This republic subsequently originated a totally new European political system, and formed a new epoch in history. In the struggle which the Netherlanders sustained, first for the maintenance of their ancient rights, and then for the achievement of their full independence, Catholics and Protestants were originally united. These religious differences, it is true, led to the rupture of the revolted provinces, and occasioned the reunion of Brabant with Spain, while Holland remained permanently severed. The influence, however, of this alliance of different religious parties for the sake of their common defence and from motives of common patriotism remained very great. It was in Holland that principles of genuine toleration were first developed, and a religious peace established, which was not, as in France and England, accompanied by the oppression of one party, and intended merely to subserve a political object; nor, as in Germany, a peace consisting in the recognition of mutual rights, though attended with permanent hostility, and hence, in reality, a mere truce, a suspension of arms, but a real peace, based upon inward convictions and knit by moral ties. The advantageous results of this religious pacification were more immediately evinced in the intellectual and scientific culture, wherein Holland speedily outstripped all the countries which had taken part in the general convulsions of the time. When Europe became divided by the religious schism, the literature and scientific cultivation of each country and nation likewise became more confined within the natural limits; the literary intercourse and union, which had till then existed, either altogether ceased, or was much relaxed. In Hugo Grotius, Holland was the first since the Reformation to possess once more a European scholar, like those who were formed prior to that event, or at still earlier periods, and of whom, even in the first years of the Reformation, some still existed. He was a scholar who exerted the greatest influence upon his age, upon all Europe, and, we may even say, upon the history of the world. The large share he took in the formation of modern international law is alone sufficient to establish the truth of this assertion; while, by his comprehensive learning and largeness of mind, he rose so superior to his age of angry controversy, that though, beyond comparison,

the first of Protestant scholars, he was withal so honoured by the ancient church, that she almost accounted him one of her sons. Even in Holland, Grotius did not altogether escape persecution on the part of more narrow-minded thinkers; and, at that time, in any other country, a spirit like his could scarcely have sprung up, could hardly have attained such moderation, such loftiness of views. If Holland did not remain wholly free from all agitation, yet never did that agitation come to such frightful outbreaks as in France and England; a result to which the ceaseless vigilance necessary for self-defence in a state of such limited extent and in so dangerous a position greatly contributed.

After the Reformation, the several countries and nations of Europe became much isolated; the general intercourse of Europe was almost suspended.

The western nations alone, under the still preponderating influence of Spain, retained any close union. Since the age of Charles the Fifth, the thirty years' war, in which almost every power took part, and which gave birth to a new system of political relations, and to a new configuration of Europe, was the first great European event. To obtain a clear insight into this great event, we must first cast a glance at the different countries of Europe, and consider the peculiar form which the Reformation assumed among them. And first of all, let us look to the kingdoms of the north, especially Sweden, which was soon to take so important a position in the theatre of history. Even the manner in which the new doctrines were introduced into these countries is peculiar and remarkable. In the neighbouring country of Denmark, indeed, they were at once diffused with the first torrent of innovation from Germany, but in the extreme north they found but few partisans. In Norway and in Iceland the introduction of the new opinions was almost the work of violence. In Sweden the popular sentiment was utterly unfavourable to Protestantism, and so strong was the attachment to the ancient faith in that country, that Gustavus Vasa, despite the glory he had gained and the love he had inspired as a youth by the liberation of his country, yet needed all the arts of a pliant, steady, unweariedly perseverant policy (wherein he matched William of Orange and Elizabeth of England), before he could accomplish what he had made the almost exclusive

object of his long reign, and make Sweden Lutheran. Like the pastoral tribes in the mountainous cantons in Switzerland, these sons of the north, who in so many respects resemble the inhabitants of the Alps, would be little attracted by the new doctrines, not only on account of the attachment to ancient things, which is always characteristic of such races, but because those opinions appeal chiefly to the understanding. This would be still more the case, since many corruptions, imputed to the old church, many immoralities charged upon her members, were probably alien to the simple manners of these northern inhabitants, and remained unknown to them. To this very circumstance, that these northern countries became Lutheran, that the principles of Zwingli and of Calvin found no admission there, are we to ascribe the great influence which Sweden in after-times exercised over Germany, where the Lutheran party was decidedly predominant. Another happy peculiarity, also, distinguishing these lands from other countries, which took part in the new movement, is attributable to the same cause; namely, that they enjoyed internal peace, that no civil wars broke out there. Slight as the difference between Luther's and Calvin's doctrines has often appeared, it has nevertheless produced such great results in the history of the world, that in every country where the principles of Calvin gained ground beside those of Luther, we see many new political ideas unfolded, and great political tumults ensue. How favourable, after the suppression of the first popular commotions, have been Luther's doctrines to the power of princes in Germany has been already stated. This result must have occurred to a still greater extent in the north, where the new opinions were not brought in by the irresistible torrent of a popular movement, but (especially in Sweden) were wholly introduced by the arbitrary will of the sovereign. It is very conceivable that the doctrines established by Calvin and Zwingli in Sweden, developed in Holland, and thence, as from a secure haven, diffused through France and other countries, would have a far more republican tendency. This republican spirit attained its culminant point in the Protestant opposition party of the Puritans in England. This total difference of political principles between the two leading parties of the Protestants has been attended with such vast and wide-spread historical consequences, as far as

North America and down to the most recent times, that we must not rest contented with pointing out the mere external causes. We think it necessary, therefore, to refer in a few words to the internal causes of a difference so remarkable. Of the Protestant doctrines it has been said that they constitute a pure religion of the understanding. By some they have been extolled for bringing the imagination and the action of the senses under the strictest control of the understanding and of morality. By others again, those doctrines have been considered as injurious, for cramping too much the free scope of the imagination, and thus proving especially unfavourable to the progress of the fine arts. Now in this respect the two leading Protestant parties in the first period of the reformation during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries differed from each other, and this very difference explains likewise their antagonistic political tendencies, as the one was favourable to monarchy, the other more inclined to republicanism. The cause of this difference lay precisely in the distinctive character of their doctrines, little as, at the first glance, this diversity may appear essential to the superficial views of our time. Christianity is distinguished from every other religion, based like itself upon the doctrines of one almighty God, and of an immortal state of rewards and punishments, by this principle. The Christian doctrine of the Godhead does not propose a mere simple conception of the understanding, as is the case in the natural religion of philosophers, or even in the creed of Mahomet. Far from assuming that the fulness of the divinity can be embraced by the reason, the Christian religion rather represents the divine essence as a mystery impenetrable to the reason; and this is the first difference between Mahometans and Christians in their views of the Godhead. In Christianity not only the essence of the Godhead, but also the mode in which the deity reveals himself to, and enters into communion with, man, and the mode in which man reunites himself and approximates to God, is conceived and represented as a mystery, which the understanding cannot altogether compass and conceive, but which must act chiefly on the heart and the imagination. Now the earlier Lutherans agreed altogether with the Catholics in this recognition of the mysterious, and the fact explains why so many unprejudiced men on both sides at the commencement considered a reunion of the churches possible.

In this common recognition of the mysterious, the two parties were really agreed upon the first and most essential principles, the very principles which it would be most difficult for a mind trained in the school of the philosophers to admit and to appropriate. The doctrines of Calvin and Zwingli, on the contrary, by their denial of mystery in the most essential of all external rites, reached and shook the deepest foundations of the ancient faith. The great diversity was speedily and strikingly displayed even in externals. As belief in the incomprehensible, precisely because the object of faith is not to be comprehended by the understanding alone, naturally leads to symbolical representations and allusions, so the ancient church had not only regarded as essential various outward media, signs, and rites, but tolerated, nay encouraged, all kinds of emblematic representations, employing the fine arts to the glorification of faith.

All these external symbols were rejected by the Calvinistic sect, without mercy, nay even with hatred, as utterly pernicious, and they thereby showed their doctrine to be a pure belief of the understanding. But this remark is by no means applicable to the older Lutherans, because they still recognised the essential mystery itself, the principle of all that external symbolism. Hence, also, they retained far more external rites than the Calvinists; and as, moreover, the ancient church itself did not esteem all these rites to be equally old, essential, or important, they would easily have adopted still more, and even most of them, provided only peace and reconciliation had otherwise been possible. Another remarkable difference between the two leading Protestant parties consisted in this, that all further and later sects, whereof many even in recent times, in England and America at least, have possessed no inconsiderable political influence, sprang out of Calvinism. In this party there was originally implanted a principle of progressive change and continuous innovation, as whatever is governed by the understanding necessarily alternates from one extreme to the other.\* Hence, also, in the earlier period, the Calvinist creed rapidly surpassed the Lutheran in intellectual development; the principle of this progressive and perpetual change contained the germ of endless agitation. At a much

\* This is evidently an allusion to the contradictions of modern German philosophy, as predicted by Kant.



later period the Lutkeran party, it is true, fell here and there into a kind of internal dissolution, which likewise occurred in a considerable part of the Catholic church; but of new sects, of which the Calvinistic party was so fruitful, it generated scarcely one; nay, the Lutherans were agreed originally with the ancient church in teaching that the faith in the true God, such as it had been once revealed, could suffer no essential alteration. Of most importance, however, is the influence which this one fundamental difference must have exercised over political opinion. In the same relation as in the domain of faith, the incomprehensible idea of the deity, acting on the heart and the imagination, stands to the pure rationalistic conception of God; so in the domain of politics, the king—the living, the visible representative of justice, who not only prescribes to the understanding and the will what is law and duty, but also claims the heart and affections of his people, and even appeals to the imagination by the splendour of external pomp—in that very same relation, we say, stands the king to the dead letter of the law which reason requires in the state. Where mere reason, where the views and doctrines of rationalism predominate, there will the exclusive sovereignty of law be regarded as the essence of the state, which any foreign admixture can only render impure, and where the living representative of the law will be at most regarded and tolerated as a mere unessential appendage, a temporary expedient necessary for the unenlightened multitude. There are other faculties in man, however, besides the understanding, which assign far higher importance and dignity to royalty, and teach us to regard it, not as an imperfection in the state, which will pass away with the advance of civilization, but as the real essence thereof. Hence it is not from an accidental, but from an essential difference of principle, that the ancient church (and on this point the Lutherans agree with it) is more monarchical; while the Zwinglian and Calvinistic communities in Switzerland, Holland, England, and North America, are more disposed to republicanism. This is not said in censure, but simply to show the internal causes of what has actually occurred. Who indeed can deny that in the abovenamed countries this republican spirit has produced, together with some passing confusion, great and glorious results beneficial to mankind?

## LECTURES XVII. &amp; XVIII.

## FROM THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR TO LEWIS THE FOURTEENTH.

As Switzerland, after its first successful war of independence, became a considerable, even a great, military power, so did Sweden also, when it was emancipated from Denmark. In Europe, powers of apparently inconsiderable greatness have usually brought about the most decided changes, or at least have the most influenced its historical course. Thus did Venice in the times of the Crusades, Switzerland during the Burgundian and Italian wars; and as Holland at the commencement of the eighteenth century gave a new form to Europe, so did Sweden predominate in the seventeenth century, and in the earlier half of that age surpass France herself in splendour. In martial courage, simplicity of manners, and in qualities of race, Switzerland and Sweden were similar. Yet there were also great differences between them. In Switzerland there were from early times two main elements totally different from each other; Berne, martial, as was all Switzerland, and moreover thirsting for conquest on the most comprehensive scale; and then the Alpine tribes, who simply desired freedom on their mountains, were only now and then induced to join in those comprehensive schemes, but never prosecuted them heartily, and often not at all. Between these lay Zurich, with different principles from the others, and involved in a closer connection with Germany; we pass over many other differences and heterogeneous elements. Had those daring schemes succeeded, as more than once seemed possible, a part of Suabia, Alsace, the Tyrol, Savoy, and Milan would perhaps have been incorporated; a frontier on the shores of the Mediterranean, favourably situated for the commerce of a free state, would have been acquired, and warlike Berne might have become as powerful as Rome before the second Punic war. The strength of the Swiss was great, but was never quite united, as was that of the Swedes, equally distinguished for martial courage, under a king, the beloved king of his people, sprung from the house of Gustavus Vasa, the liberator. Yet, under the immediate

descendants of Gustavus Vasa, it appeared as if the Catholic faith were about to triumph again over the new Protestant creed, through the new dynasty itself; and this was not surprising, considering the manner in which the latter had been introduced by Gustavus Vasa. The first enterprises of this liberated, martial, and conquest-loving people and their king were directed primarily for the sovereignty of the Baltic and its coasts against the disputed maritime provinces of the Teutonic order, against Poland and Prussia. The Protestant faith triumphed, and the war with Poland not only nerved the strength of Sweden, but was the occasion of her interference in the German wars. Poland (although after her union with Lithuania, a considerable power) had been wholly absorbed by her own affairs, or those of her immediate neighbours, Prussia, Russia, and Turkey, and had taken no part in the great European struggles under Charles the Fifth. The extinction of the ancient race of Jagellon now for the first time involved her in the affairs and disputes of Europe in general. For the election of a foreign prince appeared advisable, probably in order to avoid rivalries among native grandees of equal power; under such a sovereign, likewise, all who were powerful enough to desire it, and to enforce what they desired, might expect fuller freedom than under a native ruler. The first trial with a French prince, afterwards King Henry the Third of France, quickly terminated in mutual disgust, and in the secret flight of the stranger. That a prince of Transylvania should be at the same time king of Poland was an arrangement that might appear advantageous, from their common warfare against the Turks. Under the established constitution, if a foreign king were not to remain a mere shadow, without power or authority, he must have been chosen from some neighbouring and not very remote kingdom; if he even possessed and governed such a kingdom, it would not have been injurious to freedom, because this additional power would be a distant and foreign, and not a domestic one. By ideas of this kind, the leading men of the nation must have been guided, since in all changes we invariably find two parties, a Swedish and an Austrian one; the latter on several occasions brought about elections of Austrian princes, which, however, were never finally persisted in. On the part of Austria such elections were so little sought for, that the first election came quite unexpected.

The general motives that determined the proceedings of these parties have been already alluded to. The ancient connection with Hungary, the bond of a common defence against the Turks, and the identity of the dominant religion, all spoke in favour of Austria. The house of Sweden, notwithstanding, retained the upper hand; but, as Sigismund was a Catholic, he lost the Swedish crown, and he connected himself by the ties of relationship with the imperial house of Austria. In his war with Gustavus Adolphus, however, he rather expected than gained assistance from that quarter, as Austria was too much engaged with contests in her own neighbourhood to lend him any aid. Russia, which in the time of Maximilian the First, after the ravages of the Mongols, had risen under Vasilowich the Great to the rank of a first-rate power, now on the extinction of its ancient dynasty fell into utter confusion. Sweden and Poland contended for the prize of the Russian crown, and the armies of both penetrated deep into the heart of the country. The nation finally rallied under a new native dynasty, and preserved its independence, although with the loss of some provinces. Russia was still severed from the rest of Europe, less by its remoteness than by its adhesion to the Greek church. Upon that church the doctrines of Protestantism, despite several attempts, exerted not the slightest influence. But as far as the dominion of the Catholic church extended, so far also did the influence of the new doctrines spread; and in Poland and Hungary that influence was very considerable. The difference of the effects of the Reformation on these countries, from those it produced in other European states, was that, together with the Protestants, recognised in Germany and all northern countries, such sects as were not tolerated at all, either in Germany or in the rest of Europe, repaired to Poland and Transylvania. Toleration of different sects had been long introduced there by necessity, as a large portion of the population belonged to the Greek schismatic church; and if this was not a formal, deliberate, recognised principle of state, yet a refuge for those sectarians not elsewhere tolerated, was more easily found in those countries, if only from their domestic policy and administration being, after the manner of oriental kingdoms, comparatively lax. In Hungary and Transylvania this was the more the case, as the former was divided between Austrian and

Turkish rule, and the latter fluctuated alternately between the two powers. In Hungary, where the influence of the Reformation was particularly strong, by reason of the close connection of that country with Germany, its most immediate effect was still further to increase those heterogeneous elements, of which these kingdoms even in respect to race and language were composed. Whether this diversity of internal elements should one day lead to more general principles of religious toleration, such as were never realized even in Holland and Germany; whether this very diversity were to be connected with a richer variety in the organization of the whole body politic, or were to bring about only disunion and anarchy;—all this was reserved for the future, to the spirit that might animate it, and to the heroes it might produce. More than one great lawgiver and organizer of the nation had Hungary reckoned among her kings; but what they had achieved, as well as all the fruits of Italian and German civilization, perished for the most part in the ravages of the Turks. Poland, though spared from this misfortune, yet, among her many kings, distinguished for martial prowess, never possessed one except the great Lewis, who ruled both kingdoms; who, as a great lawgiver, founder, and organizer of the nation, was for Poland, what Stephen, in the middle age, and Mathias Corvinus, at the revival of learning, were for Hungary. The immediate effect of the spread of the Reformation in that country, from the then prevailing rancour of minds, was to render this portion of her dominions more ineffective for the house of Austria. Under Maximilian the Second, indeed, some provinces of Hungary were wrested from the Turks; and still more successfully under Rodolph the Second, not only Transylvania, but all Wallachia, which, by its own energy under a brave prince, had thrown off the Turkish yoke, and were brought under the imperial sovereignty and protection. But from the influence of the religious schism, and from the discord and wars thence arising, every hope again vanished; and Hungary, divided in faith, added less to the power than to the dangers of the imperial house, at the time when Ferdinand the Second saved it from utter destruction.

As early as the reign of Ferdinand the First, that great inward ferment showed itself, which the propagation of the

new doctrines had produced, and which, in the latter years of Rodolph the Second, attained so fearful a height. Towards those who had been disloyal to him in the Smalcald war in Bohemia, Ferdinand, who was undoubtedly neither harsh nor despotic, believed himself bound to act with severity. How tolerant he was in religious matters, both in his acts and in his feelings, is well known. Still more so was Charles's beloved Maximilian the Second; but howsoever praiseworthy was this quality in itself, still he was, perhaps, too lenient for those times. When two parties are once involved in a decisive struggle, he who is called upon to be the head and leader of one party, may not push moderation towards the other so far, as to destroy the confidence of his partisans in their leader, or even to induce some of them to desert their own colours, and pass over to the principles and opinions of their adversaries. Not the hostility of the Roman court, which made so much a matter of reproach against the first Austrian emperors of the German line, concerning what unhappily it was impossible for them to avoid or to alter; not the expectation of the Elector Palatine, that Maximilian should declare himself for the Protestants, nor his public challenge for him to do so; but the uncertainty in the public mind, among Catholics, no less than Protestants, as to his real convictions, and the consequences which such uncertainty must necessarily have produced, lead us to assign as the first cause of that great commotion, which broke out in the Austrian states at the end of Rodolph's reign, the too great mildness and clemency of Maximilian. That he was wholly unselfish withal, that he was in himself anything rather than a waverer, that it was the love of toleration alone that was at the bottom of his actions, all this may sufficiently palliate the noble fault, that his sentiments were too elevated above those of his own age for him to follow them without danger for the future. Hence, though it may even be true, that by his too great leniency he only helped to prepare those violent outbreaks which he sought to avert, yet his intentions must not therefore be mistaken. Had he lived and reigned longer, he would probably have seen the necessity of uniting firmness with mildness; and then the great expectations which had been formed of him as emperor would have been fully realized. Distinguished quali-

ties of mind and heart he possessed in abundant measure, and he had also given undoubted proofs of courage and military capacity. To allay the ferment that had risen up under the shade of this clemency, Rodolph the Second was ill suited, although in intellect and learning he far surpassed most of his contemporaries. His thoughts were rarely at home upon the earth; how then must that age, with its embittered passions and often petty and selfish contests, have appeared in his eyes, who was wont, and loved nothing better than to be alone with Tycho Brahe and Kepler, to contemplate, in the starry heavens, the laws of eternal order and harmony. This taste was not with him an idle pastime; he not only followed the ideas and observations of those great men, but was himself a learned investigator in several branches of physical science. He was the less able, it is true, to be, and to accomplish what, in his position, and amid that pressure of menacing events and approaching danger, was expected and demanded of him. Yet his repugnance to affairs, very conceivable in his temper of mind, was not indifference to the public weal. Even in his latter state, when he appeared wholly abstracted and sick in mind, he was busy with projects of a general pacification. But how could the peace, which contemplation and the love of nature had implanted in his own heart, then find entrance into the embittered minds of that contentious age? This unhappy turn of mind, and ultimate mental malady of Rodolph, together with the impatient vehemence of the ambitious Mathias, who, by the consent of the princes of the house, and then by the voice of Germany, was called upon to grasp the unsteady helm of the state in Rodolph's place, now produced in the reigning house itself a discord and excitement, which rendered that existing among the people and in the state extremely dangerous. In his youth, when summoned to the Netherlands during the first commotions in that country, Mathias had already shown that he was wanting in prudence and moderation. He ought, at least, not to have united with the prince of Orange, and forcibly expelled Don John from the country. By such a policy he utterly failed in accomplishing the great and noble object in which his mission lay; namely, to be a protector of the Netherlands, the mediator and peacemaker between that land and Spain; and

he only increased the mistrust and alienation, which already prevailed between Spanish and German Austria. On taking the place of his deposed brother, Mathias displayed none of those brilliant, great, and benevolent qualities, which alone could have caused his ambitious intrigues to be forgotten. When the unavoidable pressure of events seemed to menace him with a fate similar to that which he had prepared for his brother, how differently, and with what dignity and moderation did Ferdinand act on assuming the dangerous position, which he alone, as all men felt, possessed the courage and strength to maintain with honour. As once all eyes were bent upon Charles the Fifth, when by a decisive election he was called upon the great stage of the world's history, so were they now upon Ferdinand; who, too, was summoned to a not less great and important, but most arduous and perilous contest. On all sides that wild storm of war was now gathering, which had so long hung menacing over Germany like a heavy thunder-cloud, which appears to recede only to return, and break forth with redoubled fury.

The predisposing elements for this civil strife had long existed. Even the peace, which Ferdinand concluded between the adherents of the new and of the ancient faith, when his brother Charles left Germany after the defection of Maurice, was a mere truce, and was, moreover, no very definite one. It was only the love of peace of the emperors, and that of the principal Lutheran princes after the death of Maurice, that upheld it. When Maurice of Saxony was snatched by a premature death from his ambitious schemes, the first and greatest danger indeed passed away. With his penetrating sagacity and profound dissimulation, his ambition, if it could not have obtained the sovereignty over Germany (for to that effect he possessed not the faith and confidence of the people, which Gustavus Adolphus afterwards knew how to win)—his ambition, we say, would have easily given rise to long wars. At this time the Margrave of Brandenburg had already discovered the secret, which is the key to all the enterprises of the heroes of the thirty years' war, the secret of procuring by the war itself the means of supporting the war. Like the Count of Mansfeld and Christian of Halberstadt, at the commencement of the thirty years' war, did the Margrave Albert, sixty years before, make the defenceless



ecclesiastical states the chief theatre of his devastating expeditions. The German constitution, that mass of petty states too weak to carry on war, and yet sufficiently rich and productive to afford the means of supporting one, and which hung together so loosely since the imperial power had ceased to be effective; this, and the general prosperity subsisting in so lax, and in part, at least, so defenceless a constitution, rendered it possible for Germany to become, for thirty years, the theatre of a war, that when once enkindled continued to burn on, feeding itself like a devastating flame. With the love of peace entertained by the emperors and the principal Lutheran powers, especially Saxony, the special subjects of dispute might have been easily settled. Even the attempt of Gebhard, the Elector of Cologne, when he became a Protestant, to retain his territory as a temporal prince, and the quarrel it provoked, did not long disturb the public peace. Neither did the contest for the vacant duchy of Julich and Cleves lead to any general war, although it might perhaps have done so, if, by the internal troubles which broke out afresh in France, on the death of Henry the Fourth, that power had not been prevented from engaging in hostilities. The general state of relations, however, between Catholics and Protestants must have inclined both parties more and more to war. The strength on each side was apparently equal, but in reality there was a great difference. The Catholics had authority on their side, since even Protestant electors would often rally round the emperor; they had the ancient constitution, the forms, and for the most part the majority of the constitutional assemblies and tribunals with them. The Protestants, on the other hand, had the voice of the people, and all the impulse of the spirit of the time,—a perilous state of things, in which for the most part the advantage was only too much on the side of the Protestants. It has been often asserted, that the confiscated ecclesiastical lands were chiefly applied to objects of public utility; and in regard to the smaller and mediate ecclesiastical estates, this may have been the case. But if at all times, as long as the Germanic constitution had existed, the arbitrary seizure of a free city of the empire, although even an inconsiderable one, had been unanimously regarded as a breach of that constitution, and even as a just cause for war, how much more, then, was the

balance of power among the chief princely houses altered by the confiscation of entire prince-bishoprics, which were even important limbs and portions of the empire? It is self-evident that such an alteration could not be termed legitimate, at least if it were one-sided, and made without the unanimous decree of the whole empire, and of its head. It is equally so, that if a prince elected for life (as was the grand-master of the Teutonic order, and every ecclesiastical elector) publicly renounces the primary conditions of his election and his office, he is not entitled to make any claim upon the dignity and sovereignty attached to those conditions. It is incredible that for so simple a principle of law any express ecclesiastical reservation should have been needed. The Protestants, notwithstanding, refused to acknowledge it; and the temptation was undoubtedly great, when so fair an opportunity presented itself for greatly strengthening their party and propagating their doctrines. Hence we must not be surprised if some on the other side began to think peace an evil, as, after all, it did not insure them safety, and was ever accompanied by fresh encroachments, and perhaps to wish in secret that the pressure of events had never brought it about, to repent that so much had been conceded. In a contest with a new-grown power, hostile to the ancient constitution, it is true, more is conceded by the first legal recognition than can be obtained by any military success, which, however brilliant, is still subject to chance. On the other hand, the lively sympathy, which the Protestant princes took in the fate of their fellow-religionists under Catholic sovereigns, appears natural, and even unavoidable. And yet this sympathy produced most dangerous consequences to the mutual relations of princes and their people. How easily could the protection sought at the hands of a foreign power by its co-religionists be carried beyond the limits of what was lawful by the thoughtless multitude; how easily could the evil designs of a few mislead it to a really criminal alliance.

We must not in general transfer the circumstances of the present day to those times. When, on the first outbreak of disturbances in the Netherlands, four hundred churches were destroyed in three days; when, even before the breaking out of the thirty years' war, the Protestant subjects of a Catholic prince, after listening to the ardent harangues of their

teachers, loudly expressed the conviction that it were better to live under the Turkish than under a Catholic yoke,—here certainly was no question of mere difference in modes of thinking, but the state itself was directly endangered. Now when these passions have been long extinguished, it is easy for the state to leave every citizen peaceably to follow his own convictions. But were the greatest preacher of toleration in our country to have been placed on the most powerful throne of those days, he would have been unable at once to change the dominant spirit, the men, and the circumstances of the state, and to realize by his mere will what could only be the gradual fruit of time.

Premature mildness and the pacific spirit of a scientific mind, in the midst of the perilous circumstances in which the state was placed (as was the case with Maximilian and Rodolph), rather serve to precipitate an outbreak, or make it more dangerous, than to avert it. In modern times we too have seen the workings of violent opinions (which, if they do not directly concern faith, have at least some reference to it, and are of a kindred nature) upon the state and upon the destinies of nations. Opinions in that age were perhaps still more deeply rooted, passions more hotly inflamed, circumstances much more complicated from the close connection of the external church with the state, the bonds of which, in later times, have been much weakened and relaxed. Owing to the Reformation, the princes have acquired great authority in religious matters; although a formal supremacy, such as was introduced in England, was never taught in Germany. As the Protestant princes recognised no superior herein to be their judge, they acted as they pleased, and their proceedings often partook of an arbitrary and violent character. Repeatedly within a short space of time was the Palatinate compelled, by the will of its sovereign, to change its faith; within a short time it was first Calvinistic, then Lutheran, then again Calvinistic, and many thousand teachers and functionaries, who refused to acquiesce in these changes, were forced to quit the country. Can Catholic princes be blamed for claiming the same right over their Protestant subjects, that Protestant princes exerted over so many Catholics, and which even one Protestant party thought it might exercise over another? Yet in Austria this only was had recourse to,

when it was evidently the sole means of saving the state. If we place ourselves in the circumstances of those times, we shall be immediately convinced that if one party were not exclusively to triumph, but if Catholics and Protestants were to continue to live together in Germany, no other course remained possible than to adopt the principle, which was in general the foundation of Ferdinand's policy, namely, to allow the Protestants fully and freely to emigrate. This appears harsh to us, it is true, with our present views, but still it was better than permanent mistrust between the people and the prince, than constantly renewed insurrections and disturbances, entailing both cruel punishments and severe laws. The measure was less harsh at least than the expedient offered by the triumphant Protestant and royalist party in England to the weaker republican minority, of seeking new homes in another hemisphere. In Germany, on the other hand, from the multitude and variety of larger and smaller Catholic and Protestant states, the emigrants were almost certain of meeting with protection, a kindly reception, and a new home among their fellow-religionists in some neighbouring German country.

The emigration of so many industrious members was doubtless a loss to the state; and as such, we are inclined to suppose, a matter so obvious was not overlooked by the statesmen of the day; but they had not then learned to subordinate the freedom of men to the revenue to be derived from their numbers. In a later, and in many respects more refined age, when Lewis the Fourteenth sought by compulsion to enforce unity of faith in his kingdom, and yet withal to save his exchequer from any considerable loss, the measure he preferred was to convert his Protestant subjects by military coercion, and at the same time to prohibit their emigration. As in all times after civil wars an amnesty must follow, so should the history of that age be contemplated in such a spirit of amnesty. If we may not deny the great qualities of Gustavus Adolphus, who ravaged half Germany on account of its religious convictions, and who even adopted measures towards his German co-religionists, that can only be referred to the right of the sword; so also should the emperor Ferdinand the Second be judged, whose very enemies never questioned his unwavering heroic courage, nor ever doubted that he acted

sincerely and from firm conviction. Only those, like Richelieu, whose motives were visibly avarice and base views, and not conviction and enthusiasm for their cause, should the judgment of posterity and history unsparingly condemn.

Great as was the number of generals and statesmen who took part, and acquired a name in this protracted war of thirty years, there were yet but four men whose will and character determined events in it, and exerted a powerful and individual influence upon their course, and upon the spirit of the times. Ferdinand the Second, Wallenstein, Gustavus Adolphus, and Richelieu, these four men, of most different minds and creeds, gave each a different object, a different direction to the war. All the other heroes of the thirty years' war were either the instruments and assistants of these; or such who at the end of it, when events were in themselves fully developed, and now took their own course, turned the results of these events to account. We need but remove the false covering that has been thrown around the character of Ferdinand the Second, and his severe strength of soul will at once show itself in its true light. As for Austria, he undeniably saved the state: and for his brethren in faith, who but for his constancy would certainly have been crushed, he won, what under such circumstances it was still possible to win, equality of rights,—maintenance of a legal position. That a sense of duty alone, and firm conviction animated him with an heroic courage, which never forsook him in the arduous struggle, to which he believed himself called,—to which he felt himself called, can never be doubted by any, who judge from facts. That he honoured justice, he often proved in the very heat of that bitter contest. The gentle feelings, of which, with all his austerity of manners, he was susceptible, especially the fidelity and tender love he bore to his first wife, show that, although living in an age of hatred and discord, he was himself of a loving disposition. A heroism like his can neither be acquired from nor inspired by others. The reproach that he was too much under the influence of the Jesuits, is the more singular, since at a period, when ecclesiastical and religious matters were so closely connected with the state, ecclesiastical advisers, even as was the case among Protestants, were indispensable to princes. Among the ecclesiastics so unsparingly condemned, who possessed great influence in

Austria under Ferdinand, there were, we must remember, a Prince Cardinal Dietrichstein, who, as governor of Moravia, was the acknowledged benefactor of the land, and a Cardinal Pazmany, who in the history of the civilization of Hungary, will never be forgotten.

Wallenstein's singular character is perhaps best explained by his astrological phrensy. Hence his boundless pride, his contempt for other men, as beings of an inferior stamp. His guilt lay not so much in the suspicious schemes of his latter days, which occasioned his downfall, as in his ambition, which brought so much misfortune on Germany, and greatly contributed to extend the theatre of hostilities. By the design he betrayed of acquiring a principality for himself on the Baltic, he drew the king of Sweden into Germany, who was already irritated against the emperor for having rendered assistance to his brother-in-law, Sigismund. This pride reverting on itself,—this astrological mania, together with the internal glow of passions, may have unsettled Wallenstein's powerful understanding, and so justify the explanation of those, who refer some of his latter proceedings less to treason, than to this mental disturbance. What places him in the rank of the first men of his age, though others equalled, or even excelled him, in the art of war, was not only his own inventive mind, but the power he exerted over the hearts of others. What would have become of Germany had this singular astrological hero accomplished his plans,—had he actually triumphed? This at least is certain, if Austria had been animated by an ambitious and selfish policy, and at the right moment had consented to a partition with Sweden, nothing could have been easier than with this combination of strength to have kept off French influence from Germany, and to have driven back that power within its own frontiers. The booty, too, would have been large enough to carve a kingdom out of it for Wallenstein. But for such a policy Austria and Sweden were much too sincere in their convictions.

When Wallenstein was dreaming of a principality upon the Baltic; when Gustavus Adolphus, shortly afterwards, was overrunning a great part of Germany, with as much celerity as success; when Augsburg was doing homage to the Swedish king; at such a moment a total revolution was ex-

pected, and in Italy at least men were reminded of the period of the great northern migrations, and invading expeditions of the ancient Goths. After the conquest of Germany, Poland, and Hungary, even an invasion of Spain by the victorious Swedes appeared by no means impossible. The character of Gustavus Adolphus was as simple, although in a different way, as that of Ferdinand. Together with the penetrating sagacity which distinguished several of the heroes of his party, he had inherited likewise from his ancestor Gustavus Vasa the art of winning by brilliant feats the enthusiastic love of his people. A power like his over the mind and feelings of the people had never been exercised by any of his party since the time of Luther. The confidence, the faith he felt in himself, inspired others likewise with a like invincible faith. We need scarcely add, that in him ambition and love of conquest were combined and interwoven with the conviction of fighting for the righteous cause.

After the deaths of Gustavus, Wallenstein, and Ferdinand, all the grandeur of the war had gone. Richelieu alone, who had merely a destructive end in view, still remained to direct the course of those desolating flames, which he laboured unceasingly to feed. To prosecute the old French schemes against Germany and Spain, only with more caution, and consequently with more certain success, and at home to carry out completely the principles of Lewis the Eleventh, only with more violence and decision; despotism within, anarchy without, in all neighbouring states, for the sake of French aggrandizement; — such was the spirit of Richelieu's administration. Gustavus and Ferdinand fought with all sincerity for the sake of religion; Wallenstein, despite his powerful understanding, clung to astrological delusions; whereas Richelieu's system of injustice and immorality, if we look at the means he employed, whereof none appeared to him too terrible and too vile; his deliberate abuse, his contempt, his violation of everything sacred and good, can only be regarded as a real political Atheism.

The treaty of Westphalia at last put an end to the miseries of a protracted war in Germany. Hopes had been early entertained of such a pacification; attempts at one had been undertaken at various times and in various ways; these attempts had failed, had nevertheless been again diligently

prosecuted, and were at last brought to a successful consummation. At the commencement of this war, no one could have foreseen its long duration; it was, indeed, not so much a single war as a continuous series of several different wars connected with each other; namely, the war of the Palatinate, the Danish and Swedish wars, to which was finally added a French war. When the Elector Palatine was expelled from Bohemia, was driven even from his own principality, and declared to be under the ban of the empire, the war appeared concluded. This, however, was only a delusive semblance. Without Spanish auxiliaries, Ferdinand had been unable to terminate the war, and this interference of one foreign power led to that of another. The Protestant powers made common cause, and it was merely owing to accidental circumstances, that Denmark instead of Sweden appeared first as a belligerent. The German, and especially the Protestant princes themselves, could best have prevented this dangerous intervention of foreign powers, whereby the war was rendered so calamitous for Germany. If several of them, like Saxony, and this latter with more decisive energy, had rallied round the emperor, making common cause with him against the Palatine, whose enterprise they by no means approved, they could, on the other hand, have excluded all foreign powers from exerting any influence in the empire. Far from thereby abandoning the cause of their co-religionists, they would rather, as confederates, have had better means of securing the rights of their party. To repel foreign influence, to compose all disputes solely by national exertions, must be the primary law of every federal state that is to endure. As in this second war, likewise, Ferdinand gained most decisive success, Sweden entered upon the scene, and the war became most perilous and fearful. It was the heaviest blow which Richelieu dealt upon the Imperialists, when at his instigation the Catholic princes, and especially the elector of Bavaria, induced Ferdinand, in compliance with the general complaint, to supersede Wallenstein. The complaints may in themselves have been just; but the question was, whether Wallenstein's exactions and his mode of carrying on the war were not founded upon necessity, and upon the actual state of circumstances. It would have been infinitely better for Germany for yet a brief period to endure these exactions, than for



eighteen years together, out of her own resources, to nourish and to arm against herself the desolating armies of Sweden. It was thus, from his own allies and instruments, that Ferdinand, in the midst of the most brilliant successes, was often doomed to encounter the greatest embarrassment. It would not be easy to find another prince who, with such limited resources, surrounded by enemies and perils of every kind, encountering often fresh and grievous obstacles from those who combated with him and for him, and whom he could not but employ as instruments, yet with unwavering courage and serene energy ever strove after the attainment of his object. What great sacrifices did he not willingly make in order to retain Bavaria in his alliance, and Saxony in neutrality! How much regard was he not compelled to have for the interests of Spain! How much injury had he not to sustain through Wallenstein, and still more through the chiefs of the Catholic league, who, suspecting no guile, were too accessible to the suggestions of France! What Ferdinand effected for his own benefit and that of his generals, although he has been much censured for it, is best justified by comparing his acts with the violent proceedings and exactions of the Swedes when they were victorious. His demanding the restoration of church property undoubtedly much contributed to precipitate an outbreak, that the policy of France and the ambition of Sweden had already long prepared. We cannot, however, consider the conduct of Ferdinand as in itself unjust, in seeking to adhere to a treaty as the ultimate standard of legal possession, in appealing to a treaty which had been wrung from his ancestors by the Protestant party at the very moment of their success. Charles the Fifth, who well knew the world and the actual state of affairs, showed himself more compliant even in the moment of victory with regard to the churchlands; and perhaps it had been better if Ferdinand had yielded at once what he was subsequently obliged to consent to. It is satisfactorily proved, however, that not the vulgar selfishness of a conqueror, but sentiments of a very different order, were the motives that animated Ferdinand's conduct on that occasion. Wallenstein, who had systematically effected, on a large scale, what the Count of Mansfeld and Christian of Halberstadt had accomplished on a smaller one, and who had therein exhibited the indispensable and sole

means of success in a contest of this nature, was necessarily entitled to great rewards. That these served not as rewards, but as fuel to his unbounded ambition, was his own fault.

After his death, and still more after that of the emperor Ferdinand, the war became such as it had been in the outset. Individual adventurers and leaders, spreading havoc hither and thither with the speed of lightning, rather exhibited the spirit of some desolating natural phenomenon, of a fire that once enkindled rages uncontrollably around, than any great plan, the idea of one great man. The object of the war was forgotten in the war itself; the bitterness of religious hatred was merged in the animosity of a religious war. Even in Wallenstein's army, and especially in the second part of his military career, it was not enthusiasm for the one religion or the other that was the animating principle of the whole body, but a peculiar military spirit, somewhat indifferent to religious opinions, and quite independent of them.

The peace that was at last brought about by necessity, constituted an epoch in European history. It was a great religious pacification—it was a recognition that to terminate by arms the dispute between the ancient faith and the new doctrines was an impossibility, and it was a settlement of legal relations between the adherents of the one creed and of the other.

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All the commotions and separate wars, which after the schism in religion filled the Netherlands, France, and Germany with bloodshed, and in which Spain, England, Denmark, and Sweden took part, may be considered on account of this very participation by almost all nations, and by the internal connection and complication of the events themselves, as one general European war. From the first outbreak of the troubles in the Netherlands down to the peace of Westphalia, this warfare lasted full eighty years, and during this period it afflicted most countries in Europe, and desolated and ruined some of the most flourishing. If we consider the eighty years' war between the Catholic and Protestant parties as one connected continuous struggle, it may, looking at it as a whole, appear surprising, that the Catholic party, with such apparent superiority of power, did not gain the ascendancy, and achieve a complete victory. With respect to some particular

periods in this eighty years' war, we may rather ask why the Protestants having once succeeded in gaining so much, did not follow up their success, and become completely victorious? Regarding all the Catholic powers as one of the belligerent parties, the cause of their feeble efficiency in despite of their apparent strength, lay not so much in the decay of Spanish power (for after the nerveless reign of Philip the Third that kingdom revived once more with new lustre and new energy under Philip the Fourth), but rather in the want of union among the different powers themselves. Between the two branches of the Austrian house, concord rarely prevailed; despite their frequent family alliances, distrust and alienation in the time of Philip the Second had been too long and too deeply at work to be so easily removed. Even when by the exertions

Philip the Fourth's ardent activity and Ferdinand the Second's great designs, the union still was not so perfect as it ought to have been; the difference of principles and views often produced results most adverse to their joint efforts. It was peculiarly the function of the court of Rome to serve as the bond of union between the two powers, and to knit them together in uninterrupted concord. As a mediator between them, it should have preserved the balance of power, and have once more claimed, with benefit to the common weal, the office of umpire in the affairs of Europe.

The Roman court undoubtedly at times discharged this duty, and served as the common bond of union between the Catholic powers, but it was far from exercising this function with sufficient energy and perseverance. Nothing perishes more easily than the living spirit of a confederation; and half a century of concord and of joint co-operation is often insufficient to supply what was neglected or lost in a far briefer period of mutual distrust or selfish isolation of views.

If the Roman court, as is generally acknowledged, was often not considerate enough towards the Austrian emperors, and seemed to require of them what the state of affairs in Germany rendered utterly impossible for them to grant or to accomplish, yet it is infinitely more to be censured for failing to recognise the true seat of the evil, for being almost always too forbearing towards France. For the peculiar weakness of the Catholic power in Europe originated in the fact, that

France belonged in name only to the Catholic party (and not always even so), while in fact, from her thoroughly selfish system of policy, she formed a separate party of her own. At Rome it should have been understood and foreseen, that a Gustavus Adolphus, at the head of a victorious Protestant party, was less dangerous by far to the church than the merely political and nominal Catholicism of the latter Valois, developed by the energy of a Richelieu. The church has ever had to fear her greatest foes and corrupters in her own bosom more than all her external enemies.

If we look merely to this internal weakness of the Catholic party, we may almost wonder that it did not totally succumb in the struggle, that the Protestants did not gain a complete victory. But in England and in Holland the political and religious principles and objects of the various political and religious parties thwarted each other far too much to render it possible, that even in England the Catholic party should be wholly crushed; or still less, as in Sweden, for the national mind to be turned towards schemes of conquest. And the dangerous situation and small extent of Holland would naturally render such projects alien to the national feeling. Here an obstinate, unconquerable resistance, and an independence won by the sword, was all that the Protestants could aim at or accomplish. Germany was the only country in which the victory could be complete, in which Protestantism could become a conquering power; and undoubtedly, if it had once been victorious here, it might have established its ascendancy over the whole of Europe. In Germany alone had the new faith been diffused by a real popular movement, whose power was not wholly extinct, even after the first violent outbreak, till the period of the treaty of Westphalia. In a country like Germany, so great, populous, and then so warlike, this popular energy, which exceeds all calculation, stood more than once at the entire disposal—and ready too for the most daring enterprises—of any victorious prince of the party who was competent to turn it to account. But a prince of this kind, a great hero (if we except Gustavus Adolphus alone, who was so early snatched from his brilliant career), there was none, otherwise Germany would undoubtedly have become wholly Protestant, and in the sole victor would have found one sole sovereign; and

confiscation of the ecclesiastical principalities would have become, with its then population, once more, as in the middle age, the first country of Europe, and even probably a conquering power. The king of Sweden, as sovereign of Germany, must necessarily have treated this country, and not Sweden, as the chief country of his empire, although the circumstance of his being a foreigner would have been injurious to him in public opinion, had he lived longer, and had he continued to conquer. Maurice of Saxony was the only German prince, before Gustavus Adolphus, who could have executed such great schemes; he, however, from the duplicity early manifested in his character, would never have acquired equal power over the minds of the people, even if a death as early as that of the Swedish hero had not befallen him.

On attentively considering the most important events of history, we shall readily perceive that very few, indeed, have really turned out to be what they were originally designed.

The greatest projects of kings and heroes, amid the most consummate outward success, have, nevertheless, been considerably modified by the action of accidental circumstances, and more only carried out incompletely. The greatest movements of an age and of a nation have, for the most part, had a very different issue from what they at first seemed destined to have, and have often diverged far from the term towards which they were more immediately directed. Hence it is no idle speculation in history to inquire what, under certain circumstances, might have occurred; to remark on what slight circumstances it often turned, that the issue was not totally different from what it actually was. We can often best throw light on the events of history, on their true course and spirit, by transporting ourselves into the midst of these events, before they were finally decided, so as to be able to form a competent judgment on theory, and contemplate a different possible issue, with all the results it might have entailed. What would have been the consequence, what form would Europe have assumed, if the Catholic powers had completely triumphed in that long contest; if in France the party of the Guises and the Spanish influence had prevailed, and with their aid the Catholic party in England had gained the upper hand; if in Sweden, the

whole dynasty, like some of its members, had returned to the ancient faith; and in Germany, that faith had become, at least, the predominant one? The answer to this question is not unimportant, even for the accuracy of many views and principles regarding the constitution of the various states of Europe and the civilization of mankind. Spain and Austria, as after the first victories of the Emperor Ferdinand the Second, seemed to be universally feared, would then have gained a decided ascendancy over all Europe. This ascendancy, however, from the very partition between two, would not have been injurious to freedom, still less could it have brought about the much-dreaded universal monarchy. This would be more the case, as the Roman court, the natural bond and independent point of union between the two, would be urged by every motive to uphold the balance of power, and to preserve freedom. To freedom of thought, to the development of mind, the consequences could scarcely have been so injurious as one might anticipate at the first glance. The limitation to this liberty was indeed merely introduced on account of that moral ferment which followed on the religious schism; with victory, coercion would of itself have subsided, and with the re-establishment of religious unity, freedom likewise, and the harmonious development of the intellectual powers, such as before the Reformation had advanced with steady, unbroken energy, have not failed to return. One important difference alone would have occurred. As modern European civilization, wherein the Protestant spirit has obtained the ascendancy, proceeded more from a one-sided development of the understanding, which in Protestantism has always maintained a decided preponderance; so, in the event supposed, intellectual culture would have rather been directed by the imagination, as occurred in Spain and Italy. Subsequently, when coercion was dropped, a uniform activity and harmony of all the mental faculties would have been restored.

To decide whether Europe in such a case would have been happier, scarcely belongs to the province of history. Not only a different intellectual culture, but even a different history, would the last century and a half have had to show. For it is manifest, that the mightiest movements of that period originated in those principles and in that bent of public

opinion, which sprang, and necessarily would spring, from the partial cultivation of the understanding, that then prevailed.

On the other hand, if all Germany had become Protestant, had fallen under the sway of a single conqueror and sovereign, and been once more rendered a thoroughly warlike, perhaps conquering nation, what would have been the consequences? Brilliant perhaps for the political power, and the development of the national energies, but scarcely so favourable at first to intellectual freedom as we are apt to suppose. We have already stated, that with respect to the unchangeable definitions of faith, the older Lutherans were not less strict than the ancient church. In that church, indeed, the standard of faith is the simpler of the two; it contains simply the idea and the fact, which all Christian parties acknowledge as the basis of Christianity, together with a few negative definitions directed against new doctrines of dissent. In other respects free scope was left to philosophy, as the history of the times prior to the religious schism sufficiently proves. But among the older Lutherans the rule of faith in their symbolical books was spun out into a very detailed system, and hereby intellect was much more fettered. Even if the Lutheran church had been victorious, freedom could have been only developed when the coercion (which in reality was on both sides occasioned chiefly by the contest itself, and was adapted only to a state of contest) should cease; when victory was achieved and the struggle terminated. Very different, however, would have been the course of European civilization, had Protestantism triumphed throughout Germany, and thence (as would probably have been the case) throughout a great part of Europe; very different, we say, would European civilization have been from what it was when the balance of power between the two parties was formally established. All those effects, which in the history of modern times we attribute to the exclusive sway of the understanding as their internal cause, would then have been far more rapidly and universally developed. It is very probable that internal conflicts and wars would have broken out among the Protestants themselves. Besides a John of Leyden, Germany perhaps would then have also beheld a Cromwell, and other singular and fearful phenomena. From the exclusive sway of the

understanding to fanaticism is a transition far from difficult ; every power that has been repressed seeks to revenge itself by an outbreak of redoubled force.

In Germany, with the first outbreak of the religious schism, fanaticism was let loose ; it was not indeed publicly visible, nor did it exert much influence in politics ; but in secret its power was widely diffused. Opinions, such as those which a singular and extraordinary man like Wallenstein embraced, were everywhere diffused, and not without well-connected reciprocal support. Perhaps even Wallenstein's rapid rise—a part of his extraordinary resources, may be explained by such secret associations. If all his plans could have been realized, a very peculiar state of public life and of opinion, and one equally different from the new doctrines and the ancient church, would undoubtedly have arisen and become predominant.

None of these extreme cases, however, were destined to occur ; neither the ancient church nor the new doctrines were to gain a complete victory. On the contrary, the chief result of the treaty, which at last terminated the protracted contest, was to proclaim the award of history, that that struggle could not be composed or decided by force. Had the ancient church triumphed in the contest, the victory, because it had been obtained through a contest, would yet have seemed merely the result of force. Had the Protestant doctrines prevailed, it is incalculable how much of the ancient civilization and the ancient constitution, which in later and more tranquil times has been appreciated and turned to account, would have irrevocably perished with the ancient church. So far the then existing state of division must be acknowledged and considered by both parties as a benefit, or at least as the less of two evils. The schism, moreover, has in some cases perhaps served, through the contest it excited, mutually to sharpen and elevate the intellectual energies. Generally, however, the result has been, that the destructive spirit of contentiousness, like a slow poison, has continued to prey on all around it, and that the long struggle has terminated in the exhaustion and mutual disorganization of parties. By the spirit of schism true civilization is never advanced, but by the spirit of concord, by the harmonious exertion and development of all our faculties.

Such, then, were the political consequences of the Re-



formation. After a state of doubt and hesitation, before the new doctrines were fully understood—a state that lasted fifty years, and included the first isolated wars in Germany and Switzerland—there ensued a general religious war of eighty years' duration. When, at last, by a treaty of peace, the impossibility of any decision by force of arms was recognised, once for all there gradually ensued, through the fixed establishment of the schism, an internal disorganization of all the principles and maxims by which life is guided, moulded, and regulated. Under the delusive show of moderation and peace, moreover, this great internal change finally brought about violent commotions and revolutions, not less mighty and stormy than those of old; it was demonstrated more clearly than ever, that mind, that ideas, are the motive powers of history.

As a European treaty of religious peace (and such it was, at least in its general spirit and in its remoter effects, although isolated facts at a later period, especially in England, may recall the earlier epoch of bitter religious wars), as a great European religious pacification, the treaty of Westphalia was at least the termination of a great and protracted evil. In respect to Germany, its results, like those of the preceding war, were altogether pernicious. The influence of foreign powers became now fully recognised, and admitted as constitutional; so that even in times of peace, the manifest germs of further troubles, and encroachments, and ulterior wars (all of which actually ensued), and even of a total political disorganization and dissolution, were plainly perceptible. It was only the length or the shortness of the term, and the diversity of the mode wherein this dissolution should take place, that could remain a subject of doubt. From this period, moreover, the power of the middle class in Germany has gradually declined. The free towns of the empire, it is true, remained as a monument of ancient freedom, and in several districts the towns dependent upon the princes still participated in some degree in parliamentary rights. This, however, as the military art had been totally changed, and the power of the princes was always on the increase, was a mere outward semblance, rather than a genuine effective power, such as the towns possessed in southern and Rhenish Germany before the religious schism, when they were able to cope in war even with the princes

and nobles, or at the prosperous period of the Hanseatic League before the thirty years' war. It was this war which ruined the ancient prosperity and great wealth of Germany. Germany, it is true, had already suffered by the discovery of the new world, whose superabundance in gold and silver cast completely into the shade our old national mines of the precious metals. The old course, too, of the Eastern trade, first through Italy, and then through Germany, was more favourable to the latter. This loss, however, had not been fatal to her prosperity, and even up to the thirty years' war, Germany, although without the gorgeous riches of Spain and Portugal, yet perhaps surpassed in real prosperity and vital internal wealth all those countries, which, through the discovery of the new world, had risen to sudden fortune. The source of German prosperity, like that of a large portion of England's wealth in the eighteenth century, lay in manufactures; for in all branches of the same, by the quantity of production, and in some even by the quality, Germany at that period, like England in modern times, surpassed all other countries of Europe. All this prosperity was destroyed by the thirty years' war; countless numbers of artisans emigrated or embraced the military life, or became impoverished and perished. In every detailed history of that war we meet with astonishing instances of individual towns, where before the war the number of craftsmen in trade were reckoned by thousands, and after it but a few individuals were still to be found. England, Holland, and Denmark systematically took advantage of Germany's unhappy situation to augment their own commerce. The diminution in her population completed the losses of Germany, and served to perpetuate them. It would be an instructive inquiry to examine what proportion of her population Germany lost by this war, whether it was one-half, or perhaps even two-thirds; for, in the history of the world, but few wars are comparable to this for its devastating effects.

Not only the number, but the spirit also, of the surviving population was changed, and indeed permanently so, by the peace of Westphalia. At all times the Germans have been a warlike nation, for a long time also divided; when united, they have ever been the first in Europe. Even in those ages when trade and manufactures occupied a large portion of the people, not only the nobles, but the cities also, were always

animated by a martial spirit and by martial courage. A great part of the German empire, the whole mass of petty states, were now forced to a state of perpetual peace; for only a few of the greater princes were still powerful enough to undertake any considerable military operations, which even to them were matters of difficulty, from the artificial complication of their political relations, and to the wisest could but seldom appear expedient in the new order of things. Good and wholesome this state of things might be perhaps termed, in respect to internal tranquillity; but, from the slender external security which that peace in other respects promised, it was nothing else than leaving Germany for future times defenceless and unarmed to her inevitable destinies.

When peace was at last concluded in Germany, the flames of war, which had been there enkindled, still raged nevertheless, for a considerable time, at the opposite extremities of Europe. The contest between France and Spain, which lasted ten years longer, was a mere continuation of the general war. In the north, the ambition of Sweden having been once aroused, now appeared, under Charles Gustavus, a restless and daring monarch, to menace all neighbouring states more than under Gustavus Adolphus himself. Had Charles Gustavus succeeded in completing the conquest of Denmark, he might have founded a kingdom that would have long been the first northern state. His conquests, however, like Charles the Twelfth's in subsequent times, were rather brilliant and fearful, like a passing meteor, than calculated for permanent duration. It was proved by the example of Sweden, that in Europe at least, and with the exception of very rare cases, a conqueror is restrained by geographical limits. Hence the slow but vigorous growth of Russian power, under the sway of the house of Romanof, was incomparably more solid than that of Sweden in its most brilliant epoch. By the treaty of the Pyrenees, which ten years after that of Westphalia terminated the contest between France and Spain, the ascendancy of the former, and the decay of the latter, which till then may have seemed doubtful, were plainly exhibited. The germs of this decay, indeed, were sown even under Philip the Second, by his unbending severity, and by his overstraining all the national energies, but, above all, by his violent seizure of Portugal, and the putting down of the popular liberties in Spain itself, a suppression which had

arisen from the animosity of religious strife. Neither Philip the Second nor his successors, it is true, attacked the Spanish constitution in any of its fundamental points, or sought to overthrow it; but yet when the Spanish kings began to live retired in the seclusion of their palaces, after the fashion of the eastern sultans, it could not fail to exercise a deep influence upon the whole life and spirit of the state and the administration. But what, perhaps, more than anything else contributed towards the decline of Spain, was failing to give fresh life and stimulus to the national energies by a periodical convocation of the general Cortes. Under Philip the Second, nevertheless, the power of the state, and eminently so that of the nation itself, was still very great, and many errors might be still committed ere that greatness could utterly perish. How fully capable Philip the Second was to keep the state together with a vigorous hand, and even to govern it, was best evinced under the reigns of his successors. Philip the Third was bred up with the most anxious solicitude to prevent in him the premature growth of that ambition which, in the case of the unfortunate Don Carlos, had burst out with such passionate violence, for men are in general apt to think they can best compensate for an error by going to its opposite extreme. Hence Philip the Third, with many good qualities, was unable to restrain the great officers of state, his chief representatives and governors, from abusing their power. This absence of political discipline produced many injurious effects in the state, and even in Italy; for some Spanish grandees (as in the well-known conspiracy of the marquis of Bedmar at Venice), by their abuse of power, inflicted incredible and incalculable injury, in public opinion, upon Spanish glory and Spanish influence. Hence arose violent reactions, the by no means unimportant hostility of Venice; and hence was Richelieu enabled to strike the first great blow at Spanish might in Italy. The expulsion of the Moriscoes in the reign of Philip the Third, as well as the revolution in Portugal under Philip the Fourth, must perhaps be ascribed, as the inevitable consequence of his errors, to the first violent measures of Philip the Second, which were no longer to be remedied. Under Philip the Fourth, moreover, the Spanish monarchy in many respects revived once more with new splendour; perhaps the only error now committed was in seeking to

accomplish too much at once, in reviving all contests that had been once set on foot. The effects, too, of many earlier political errors now for the first time became manifest. Hence Spain could no longer cope with her enemies; the minority that ensued on the death of Philip the Fourth brought about a new state of decline, that in the reign of Charles the Second made much further progress. After his death, the war of succession proved ruinous to Spain; and under the French dynasty the old Spanish glory and Spanish influence in Europe disappeared.

Thus was accomplished the desire of Richelieu to reduce Germany to a permanent state of feebleness, and to undermine the power of Spain. In this respect the way was vigorously prepared for Lewis the Fourteenth. This serves not, however, to dim his glory; for every brilliant epoch in history has had the way thus prepared for it, and often has long existed in germ ere in its outward development it filled the world with the amazing lustre of its glory. Thus was the way paved for Charlemagne also, and for Charles the Fifth. Like Charles the Fifth, Lewis the Fourteenth was also surrounded by many great men both in war and politics, in science and literature. This is no drawback on the merit of Lewis the Fourteenth; for it is precisely this royal art of encompassing himself with great men, of appreciating merit and genius, employing them, and rallying them around him, that is the primary and most essential quality in the sovereign reign of a great monarchy. This it is that has made the fame of Lewis so great. The French monarch possessed also the art, which in so high a degree characterized Philip the Second, of imparting to all that surrounded him, to all that he did, the stamp of dignity. Nevertheless, in comparing Lewis with Charles the Fifth, we find one point of difference between them. Of Charles, for example, it would not be easy to prove, that besides the great men, less competent and worthy, individuals enjoyed such influence with him, as was often the case with Lewis, especially in the latter years of his reign, when great talents both in the field and in the cabinet were replaced by mediocrities.

If the brilliant epoch of France under Lewis the Fourteenth, after domestic tranquillity was at last re-established, is to be chiefly ascribed to the internal energies of the nation itself;

yet is this fact common to all the great and shining periods of history. If we inquire into the use he made of these noble resources, into the objects and plans he chiefly had in view ; if we ask whether they were great and glorious in their design, and honourable in execution, the answer that is given by history to such questions would be less favourable to Lewis than his eulogists among his countrymen are wont to represent. He aimed at conquering Holland, and by that very course called into being the power of England, which had hitherto been almost dependent on his policy. King William, with insignificant power, surrounded even in Holland by obstacles and impediments, and by no means one of the first generals of his age, yet succeeded merely by calm courage and never-failing sagacity (wherein he equalled his ancestor, William of Orange) in maintaining the independence, freedom, and power of Holland, in restoring England to the rank of the most powerful and energetic states, and in giving a new form to Europe. This is one of the noblest examples that history presents of what sagacity and steadfast constancy can effect even against great superiority of force.

Again Lewis aimed at the total destruction of Austria by means of the Turkish power ; but so far was this plan from succeeding, that it was precisely the unsuccessful invasion of the Turks which roused anew the military spirit of Austria out of that state of apathy that had followed upon the thirty years' war, and which brought about such a total change in the state of things in the East ; that after the complete liberation of Hungary, and even before Prince Eugene became commander-in-chief, the reconquest of the Hungarian dependencies was likewise meditated.

If Lewis at last succeeded in maintaining his family upon the Spanish throne, yet it is well known that he was indebted only to chance for this success, and to the errors of his opponents ; to one of those sudden changes which are natural to the English constitution, and are the cause why England, after successful wars, has rarely succeeded in making advantageous terms of peace. Lewis's other schemes of aggrandizement were chiefly successful towards the frontiers of the German empire, which was now reduced to a state of constitutional feebleness. These wars were carried on in a manner, which even his panegyrists are scarcely able altogether to justify.

Not merely were these wars unjust in themselves, but a low cupidity of this kind is more looked for and is sooner forgiven on the part of smaller states, or at least states of second-rate magnitude. In large states, on the other hand, even supposing their policy to be wholly self-interested, yet the show at least of magnanimity and dignity is in the long run indispensable, and is often more important even for their real power, than any petty increase of territory.

It has been often remarked that Lewis the Fourteenth's perpetual wars exhausted the resources of France, and that hence the state of weakness into which, after his death, she was once more in peril of sinking, is not to be wholly ascribed to his successors; but that the chief source of the evil is to be sought for in his unbounded ambition. He, perhaps, inflicted the deepest and deadliest wounds on France, however, by his persecution of the Protestants, and in general by his violent interference in ecclesiastical and religious concerns. He thus called forth a moral ferment and an intellectual opposition, so strong, as in after-times to convulse France to her very depths. This untimely persecuting spirit it was that provoked the outbreak of that violent and passionate opposition which so much distinguished the French literature and philosophy of the eighteenth century, and rendered it a great and dangerous political power. As early as the seventeenth century this intellectual opposition had found in Holland, and to some extent in Switzerland, a safe asylum and a fixed point of operations. The influence that from this quarter was exerted over France by Voltaire's predecessor and chief authority, Bayle (to name but one out of many writers), was, perhaps, in its results more important than anything that generals and armies could have accomplished.

In French literature, which, in the age of Lewis the Fourteenth, attained its greatest splendour, and has invested that period with its most lasting glory, it is curious, even in a political point of view, to observe how very strikingly the Spanish taste and a Spanish tone and colouring pervaded the productions of the early French writers under Cardinal Richelieu. This is a proof how deep and mighty an influence Spain had exerted in France and even over the French mind. Richelieu's immediate object in creating a French literature was indisputably to divert attention from the oppressive sense of

misery or rebellious glances at unjust despotism. He next sought to make the court and throne the centre of all the intellectual energies of the nation, and thus to insure its rule even over mind and opinion.

The intrinsic excellence of French literature in the time of Lewis the Fourteenth with respect to France herself, and in what constitutes the foundation and the true standard of national civilization, namely, the culture of the national language, is best evinced by comparing on the one hand the perfection of style in the best writers in Lewis the Fourteenth's time, with the partly confused, partly uncouth diction of earlier authors ; and on the other hand, by considering how little the most distinguished talents of the subsequent age have succeeded in surpassing that perfection of language once attained. In respect to art and taste, the same principles, on the whole, prevailed in French literature, which in Italy likewise ever gained ground in later times ; in all departments of art and literary delineation, the imitation of the ancients was recognised as the basis of all excellence ; an imitation that was neither quite in harmony with the spirit and manners of modern Europe, nor even accompanied with an accurate knowledge of antiquity. In one respect French taste took a direction very different from, and even alien to, Italian art. In Italy, since the religious schism, philosophy had been excluded, or at least been un-influential and powerless ; and thereby the whole intellectual culture, the art and literature of Italy and Spain, was rather the culture of the imagination than of the understanding. As early as the seventeenth century, this one-sided dominion of the imagination betrayed in many phenomena, in every department of art and literature, the injurious effects of this troubled harmony of mind. The consciousness of this error provoked a reaction in French literature and art, wherein perhaps this only is censurable, that not only the abuses of the imagination were corrected, but its very spirit was wholly fettered or destroyed. These reflections, however, belong more properly to literature ; but in a political and historical point of view, it is more important to observe, that in the French literature, as well as in the Gallican church, the separation of philosophy and religion, to the great detriment of both, was more and more recognised and laid down as a principle. Hence the cause of the ancient faith, which at



the same time was that of the ancient political constitution, was left defenceless on the most assailable side, and abandoned beforehand to the attacks of an opposition, waxing more passionate and dangerous every day. The more heterogeneous the elements of this opposition, which was formed by the Calvinists, nourished by the Jansenistical controversies, and fully developed by the philosophical scepticism; which was begotten in France, fostered in Holland, and which thence reacted upon France and the rest of Europe;—the more heterogeneous the elements of this opposition, we say, the more power did it possess to effect an entire dissolution of all ancient principles and opinions.

## LECTURES XIX., XX., & XXI.

### CONSIDERATIONS ON THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

WITH joyous and exalting feelings, and often with a mingled sense of melancholy and tenderness, do we pause before the picture of the olden times, when, under a homelier and austerer exterior, the energies of the heart had a so much livelier and purer action, and when faith in the Divine embellished a narrower sphere of existence. Very different, graver, and sterner is the feeling with which we follow the history of the last centuries, through all their ramifications, down to the events of our own times. As when gloomy clouds suddenly darken a serene sky, or as when at the threatening calm that precedes the storm, our breasts are filled with anxious expectation, when we see how the old bonds are ever waxing loose, and that under the delusive appearance of a new civilization, and freedom of toleration and love of peace, something fearful is gathering beneath—that all events, in an invisible concatenation, are hurrying on towards the great, perilous, inevitable catastrophe, that sweeps everything before it in its irresistible career. If individual great men or great deeds fill us with a sentiment of admiration,—if the very doom, that was overhanging the human race, fills us with astonishment and awe; yet this feeling serves more to stir up our courage for an arduous contest, to inspire a strong feeling

as to the duty and mighty destinies of an eventful age, than to excite pure untroubled joy.

The ravages of the thirty years' war are dreadful to contemplate; but yet more mournful and painful to the feelings is the long state of impotence, humiliation, and feebleness, which succeeded that desolating conflict. Germany, it is true, was gradually restored to new prosperity; Austria, from the fulness of her inexhaustible resources, once more resumed her ancient dignity. A new sun of happiness rose over Europe, when Austria shone forth in the splendour of military glory, and when England suddenly reached the high degree of power which she still maintains. These two powers, united as the centre of a great confederacy of states, seemed at last to promise Europe, after so many storms, a universal reign, if not of strict justice, yet of mutual compromise and conciliation, an altogether mild policy, based on sentiments and principles of equity. But only too soon, after a brief enjoyment of this delusive period of outward moderation and apparent love of peace, did the prognostics and preludes appear of that universal convulsion, in which everything has been swallowed up.

The state of weakness into which Austria as well as Germany sank after the thirty years' war, was such that the emperor Ferdinand the Third, who, among many other distinguished qualities, had also given proof of military genius by his victory at the important battle of Nördlingen, when he was king of the Romans, had scarcely an opportunity of exercising any one of the virtues which were expected of him, except steadfast patience. By this quality, as well as by the indefatigable efforts of Count Trauttmansdorff, the peace for which the bruised and crushed nations had so ardently pined, and which had been so much impeded and frustrated by the clashing and selfish interests of diplomacy, was at last concluded. The same state of things continued for the first half of the reign of the emperor Leopold the First, who was at first so inferior in might to his antagonist, Lewis the Fourteenth, but at the end of his life so unexpectedly victorious. To the best and most honourable sentiments, and to most varied knowledge of every kind, this monarch united a constancy, even in extreme and utterly desperate misfortune, which would not have been unworthy of the emperor Ferdinand the Second. Yet the

great and vehement reaction, and the military glories of Austria in the latter years of the emperor Leopold's reign were not owing immediately to him, nor even to the great Eugene alone, but to the reviving strength of the entire nation, and to the general change of times and circumstances. How much time and what tedious efforts it required to raise Austria from its fallen condition after the all-devastating war, and the still unhappier peace, is best illustrated by the method and tactics adopted by Montecuccoli.\* That hero, who by his scientific investigations and discoveries created an epoch in the art of war, acquired his reputation no less by that heedful delay and procrastination so excellently suited to his weak and scanty resources. A captain distinguished for bold, rapid movements, bent upon achieving great things, would have been quite out of place in this first grade of reviving Austrian power.

In order to judge quite correctly of the history and circumstances of the times of the emperor Leopold the First, the latter half of the seventeenth century, we must weigh another effect of the treaty of Westphalia upon the internal condition of all German states. It exercised a visible influence upon the peculiar character by which German state functionaries have been distinguished since that epoch. The very different spirit which in different times and circumstances pervades such functionaries as a class apart, is altogether one of the most important objects of historical observation. It may in general be laid down as an almost inevitable occurrence, that in proportion as states grow older, so does the number of functionaries increase. Not always, not necessarily, does the spirit of this class become so exclusive as to separate itself and its interests from those of the state, a spirit ruinous to the public weal. It undoubtedly often happens, however, that the general degeneracy is more immediately and strikingly manifested in this most essential element of the body politic, so that at last the state seems to exist only for the benefit of the state functionaries. But this generally occurs in different states in very different ways. In France the spirit of absolute power naturally passed from the centre of omnipotence to the mass of the functionaries. Only in one point is the apparently uncontrolled authority of an absolute monarchy generally limited,—in money matters, namely,

\* Often written Montecuculi.

and finance. This was especially the case in France. In no other country in Europe, since the time of Lewis the Fourteenth, was the number and influence of officials in the financial department so great and this absolute spirit so predominant in the great bulk of the people. In England, political freedom and the old contest between the republican and royalist parties, the Whigs and Tories, unfolded remarkable powers and a lofty ambition among the higher class of officials, but withal a passionate party spirit, which often perverted great talents to pernicious or unworthy measures. The character of the German state functionaries was moulded by the treaty of Westphalia. At an earlier period the mixture of Roman law with the different German codes had complicated affairs. But in no treaty of peace whatever were the contentious points of public law so strictly defined with all, even the minutest, formalities, as in that of Westphalia. This system of legal formalities became now the basis of the entire German constitution, as well as of the organization of each individual country, and thus determined the spirit of all officials. But not in this alone, not in the routine of what was strictly business of the state, but also in all the occurrences of peace and war, in the whole course of events, this stamp and character of a cumbrous, slow, legal formality was apparent.

The system thus adopted in all affairs of state and this spirit of the functionaries had also its influence on the peculiar character of the German nobility, though less on that of Austria. That new form of nobility, which arose on the cessation of club-law; that form in which the nobility were considered as the true support and foundation of the throne, as an indispensable link to connect the people with the king, and in which the highest and strictest self-devotion in the service of the latter was regarded as their noblest calling, first attained its perfect development and highest brilliancy in Spain, and then in France. In Spain this spirit retained its vital energy among the nobles long after all energy was extinguished on the throne itself, yet the torpor of despotism spread more and more from that centre to all classes of society. In France, immediately after the reign of Lewis the Fourteenth, immorality was the tone at court. Lewis himself, in despite of his outward decorum, had publicly betrayed many personal weak-

nesses and propensities, which were unbecoming to the dignity of the crown. This immorality was not without injurious influence on a portion of the nobility, as, with the ancient severity of morals, principles also were relaxed. In England, a peculiar constitution, and still more the commerce of the world, introduced a wholly new and a powerful influence, that of money and wealth, among all classes, and even among the nobility. Such influence either did not subsist at all in Germany, or subsisted in a minor, far more insignificant degree. When, by the provisions of the treaty of Westphalia, Germany was permanently divided into many petty principalities, the national spirit which, in a large monarchy, ever animates the nobility with a generous love of fame, was destroyed. As most of the smaller states aimed at copying the internal organization of the entire empire in all its formalities, there often arose in the place of a truly royal nobility, animated with a high national feeling, and seeking its mission in a glorious self-devotion to the king, a mere court and official nobility fitted for outward pomp alone, and in that only distinguished. Yet, in Austria and Hungary, the martial spirit was never extinguished, even in the state of weakness to which they were reduced by the thirty years' war. It was not the genius of an individual, but the united energies of the nation, that effected the great change in the aspect of affairs towards the end of the seventeenth century, and brought about the new epoch in which, under Montecuculi, the two Starhembergs and the great Eugene, renovated Austria shone forth more gloriously than ever. And how many other names are not inscribed with these in the annals of that glorious period! All the examples of martial spirit and patriotic pride ever furnished by the Spanish or French nobility in the most flourishing ages of those monarchies were equalled or surpassed in Austria and Hungary in the period from the liberation of Vienna and Hungary from the formidable power of the Turks down to that, when Maria Theresa was indebted for the preservation of her empire to her own constancy and to the courage and enthusiastic sense of honour and loyalty of her faithful

en before the siege of Vienna by the Turks, the military resources of Austria were slowly indeed, but thereby the more solidly, re-established by Montecuculi. It was precisely the agi-

tation produced by a formidable attack, and a great and imminent danger, that fully aroused her slumbering strength. The liberation of Hungary was the glorious result of the failure of the Turkish attack upon the imperial city. Austria was thus restored to the rank of a power of the first magnitude, and thereby the foundation-stone laid for European freedom in the eighteenth century, and a firm point of support acquired for the legal and moral balance of power among the different states. The internal cause of the great changes in the eastern states and nations of Europe at the end of the seventeenth and in the course of the eighteenth century lay in the decline of the Asiatic powers. Before that period the downfall of the Mongul dominion had laid the foundation of Russian greatness, neither were the internal convulsions in Persia without influence on eastern Europe. But the chief effect was produced by the decline of the Turkish empire, which, at the end of the seventeenth century, had become evident. Singularly as that state was composed of so many subjugated nations more numerous than the ruling one, it could only attain perfect stability and unity by changing its policy and constitution. Even then, from its geographical situation, it could do so only as a maritime power, and by holding the command of the Mediterranean. Hence, to preserve permanent and healthy energy in a power of such a composite nature, and in part reposing on a basis so artificial, a mental culture, a stringent political constitution, and a vigorous activity would be needed, to which the national character, and still more, the creed of the nation, were but little adapted. Hence the Turkish empire unceasingly declined, despite the martial courage of the nation, that remained unchanged; and more than once that state owed its preservation to the disunion or the clashing interests of the allied powers of Europe.

Three things chiefly determined the character and the career of European states and nations in the last centuries. In the western countries it was commerce, that stamped its impress, and exerted an overruling influence on all things. It had the effect in the course of time of severing more and more from the rest of Europe those countries which were connected with America or with India, such as Spain and England. This arose either from a less active participation in European concerns and events, as was earlier the case with Portugal,

and in the eighteenth century with Spain also ; or as in Holland and England, by reason of the growing influence of their colonial possessions, relations, and interests over the conduct and course of European affairs. In the central countries of Europe, on the other hand, in France and Germany, the development, the changes and revolutions of public opinion, from the Reformation down to the revolution, have chiefly determined and directed the history of these states and the destinies of their people. England, indeed, took part in these movements, and so did France in commerce ; but in England what has always allayed the contests of public opinion, what restored harmony and tranquillity to the country amid the contending elements of party, but her vast commerce, the first object, need, or law of the nation ? If, on the other hand, France had no inconsiderable share in commerce, and in Indian and American acquisitions, yet was that share neither in itself so great as that of Spain or England, nor did her commerce and colonies exercise such marked and decided influence over the mother-country. Commerce exerted a more slender and remote influence in the eastern states and nations. If religious and political troubles and revolutions were not without effect on those countries, yet were these troubles only the after-results of those revolutions, whose origin and point of issue were in the central countries, such as Germany and France. As regards the progress of civilization, too, western Europe served more or less as the example and model of the eastern. But the course of events in Asia has ever remained the matter of the greatest importance for these eastern states and nations. As it was once the sudden growth of Turkish greatness and the advancing conquests of Turkish power which convulsed these states, destroying them, or developing in them new energies, so now the decline of this very Turkish power also created a new epoch in their history. Independent as Europe fancies herself ; firmly as she believes herself to be, not merely the centre, but the sum of all mankind ; dominant as European influence became in Asia and in America in the eighteenth century, more so, perhaps, than under Alexander's successors or Rome's Cæsars,—yet is Europe, notwithstanding, much fettered by this very sovereignty, by this extra-European power ; and the first sources of the changes which occur here are for the most part to be found in the movements and con-

vulsions of those remoter quarters of the world. From the end of the seventeenth century the share which each of the eastern nations took in the overthrow of Turkish power, the advantages which each of them derived therefrom, not in outward aggrandizement alone, but more especially in internal improvement, were of the most decisive influence.

In this respect Russia and Hungary take the first place. Poland, too, under her illustrious national king, Sobieski, shared gloriously in all the feats of the common war, and in the liberation of Austria, threatened for the last time with Turkish ascendancy. So was their own fatherland also, for Austria was indisputably in this quarter the rampart of Poland, as well as of Germany, and the conquest of the one would inevitably have involved the downfall of the other. Advancing in this career of victory, Poland, to become and to remain great, but needed a lawgiver such as Russia found in Peter the Great. But party-spirit and foreign influence once more obtained the upper hand, and thus Sweden's last efforts of conquest, under Charles the Twelfth, were expended in destroying Poland. After the conquest of Poland by Charles the Twelfth, and the use he made of his victory, the seeds of anarchy were scattered more widely than ever, and struck deeper roots than ever in that nation. At the same time Sweden ruined herself by the unequal struggle, and with Sweden's downfall the ascendancy and greatness of Russia were insured. That that ascendancy became permanent was the work of Peter the Great. As the victorious Eugene, the restorer of Austria and of European freedom, stands alone in the history of the southern and western states, whose affairs he surveyed with such a piercing glance and so wisely directed, for he was not less great in true statesmanship than in war, even so Peter the Great rises up before us, the creator and founder of a new empire, the benefactor of the north. The history of that period is rich and full of life, because not one man alone was all in all, but several men of the first order simultaneously co-operated from different quarters to invoke that glorious apparition of modern civilized Europe. In the single admission that he was a despot we can sun up all that was censurable in Peter. But in a state where, as in several Slavonian countries of the north, an irregular, despotic aristocracy was the only existing con-



stitution, it may be reasonably asked whether, in order to attain internal strength, unity, and an appropriate efficient constitution, anything else can in the first instance be substituted than a monarchy, which in the outset was obliged to be despotic also.

A despotism of this kind, that is adapted and fitting for a state of barbarism, has this advantage, that in after-times, as the subsequent history of Russia proves, it is possible to mitigate at least the original severity. This is not the case when despotism is not founded on barbarism, but has sprung out of anarchy, out of the dissolution of all laws, morals, and principles, as with the tyrants of degenerate Rome. Here, when the despotic power relaxes its grasp, no mitigation is to be looked for, but only fresh revolutions and convulsions.

Through internal amelioration did the growth of Russia's external aggrandizement first become really productive and lasting, and because this was Peter's first object has he been called the Great. It was especially beneficial to Russia that Holland and England were taken as her immediate models in the career of civilization, for all naval affairs, for navigation and commerce; that a sudden acquisition of outward splendour was not aimed at, but that this was best insured to future times by the solid foundation of the useful arts. It was further of advantage that in later times, with the higher French culture, the German also, the action of which on all ranks was far more universal, gained access and influence. The French refinement, on the other hand, that emanated entirely from the court and the capital, was chiefly adapted to the higher ranks. Its exclusive prevalence might have easily occasioned a separation, alike injurious to the state and to the national mind, between a thoroughly rude and barbarous people and a small number of nobles, who, enervated by revelling in foreign refinement, would feel themselves strangers in their own country.

Through very different means, than those by which the Russian empire had been founded, was Hungary (enriched as she had been from old times by German and Italian civilization) to be restored to her pristine greatness, after all the losses and ravages she had sustained under the Turkish yoke. From the abundance of her internal resources this restoration had been indeed easy, if the differences in religion, the parties thereby produced, and the prevailing mistrust, had

not here, as in Germany, thrown obstacles in the way of improvement and of progress in civilization. Hence that fine country did not reap the fruits of Eugene's victories till long afterwards, and chiefly under the mild, active, reforming, and benevolent reign of Charles the Sixth. It has been said in censure of Leopold the First, that by the severity to which he was led by his firm adherence to the ancient faith, he only increased the religious differences, as well as those obstacles, which prevented what had been so gloriously reconquered from being turned immediately to the advantage of the state in that degree, which might otherwise have been well expected from its internal resources and the fresh impulse given to its energies. This censure is in general not altogether unfounded. Although principles should remain unchanged by external events, and should be the same in all times, yet the maxims by which they are applied and carried out must unavoidably vary with times and circumstances. Hence if the constancy of Ferdinand the Second, in the very heat of a terrible contest, is justly admirable, yet a like severity in later times cannot be deemed suitable. Some virtues are unfolded on the day of battle; others when the contending powers have stretched forth the hand of reconciliation to each other. What would have become of Europe, of Germany, of Austria, had a less resolute emperor than Ferdinand the Second been opposed to the victorious Gustavus Adolphus, to the onset of insurgent nations, barbarized in temper, to the unruly and excited ambition of so many individual princes and generals? A yielding spirit, an unseasonable clemency, would only have aggravated the evil and have ruined the cause. But it was very different when a final religious peace had been concluded, and was recognised by all Europe. Now was the time to conciliate minds more and more, to evince a spirit of mutual forbearance, and to unfold the principles of toleration. If we be not contented with this general view here laid down, but seek to examine details, we shall find that, on the whole, the conduct of the emperor is fully justifiable, and that the original cause of the unhappy occurrences in Hungary during his reign is to be sought for in the proceedings of the opposite party. The opposition party here took the dangerous course of an alliance with foreign powers, with France

and Turkey, a course as repugnant to the national dignity, unity, and welfare, as it was hostile to the court itself. Fortunate was it, therefore, that other principles soon prevailed, and that, by the policy of Charles the Sixth, concord was permanently restored between king and people. To him and to the salutary influence of his internal administration upon the public mind, as well as upon the material prosperity of the country, a large share is due of that love of the Hungarian nation for his heir, Maria Theresa,—of that glorious development of national energy that, at the moment when that empress was encircled with foes, and seemed abandoned by all, saved the old imperial throne.

The renovated power of Austria was the first buttress of European freedom; the second was founded by King William, who, though with slender resources, by his steadfast sagacity overcame the ascendancy of Lewis in England, a country he saved and regenerated. The religious zeal of the Protestants had an essential share in William's undertaking, and in his success, not only in preserving Holland independent, but in liberating England by a strong reaction from the French influence to which, under the last Stuarts, she was subjected. The position of the Catholics in England, on the whole, and many individual proceedings during the reaction and revolution, were by no means compatible with perfect justice, or even with mutual forbearance and toleration. This revolution was not, however, a matter of religion only; that was but a co-operating power; the chief motive was ever resistance to the growing encroachments of Lewis. Austria was therefore justified in allying herself, without reference to religion, with the chief Protestant power, in order to preserve the freedom of Europe, although she never entertained even the wish (after the example of French policy) to support or encourage the Huguenots in the interior of France. This new alliance between the freest Protestant and the most legitimate Catholic power even contributed more than anything else to develop the principles of religious toleration, and to diffuse a spirit of mutual forbearance in all the relations between European states. The beneficial influence of this new system was manifested even in the humane method of carrying on war. How much do the cruelties, the rancour, the devastations of the thirty years' war, contrast with the

nicer sense of honour, the recognition of moral principles and relations, that mutually prevailed in the war of the Spanish succession! Unhappily we must add, that this moderation, based upon a nice sense of honour, that reminds us of the influence of the spirit of the olden chivalry, gradually declined in almost every one of the subsequent wars of the eighteenth century, and that finally this last beneficial veil of outward decorum was torn from the horrors of war.

The political relations of Europe, and the negotiations for peace at the commencement of the eighteenth century, were not indeed based on the firm foundation of perfect justice; but the prevailing spirit in them was at least moderation, a moderation more generally recognised, and becoming more dominant than hitherto. The principle generally adopted and followed in the treaties of peace was to aim at mutual contentment by a moderate gratification of all, only avoiding with the utmost care any preponderance dangerous to the balance of power. This necessarily led to the overthrow of that very balance, for under such a system of dealing with the affairs and relations of Europe, it was easy to foresee, that the smaller states would more and more be sacrificed to the gratification of the larger ones. Under such a system, Europe would become divided, if not in name, yet in fact, between a few large states; or if the weights in the scales were too often changed, and moved hither and thither, chance could suddenly intervene, depress the scale on one side, and thus destroy the artificial balance for ever.

Although this apparently mild policy of the balance of power, guided by moderation and equity, thus contained in itself the germ of its own destruction; yet we readily admit that next to perfect justice, as the highest good, and one hard to be attained by men, moderation is the next best thing, and we are only too often pained at its absence. It must also be acknowledged as a great good, when only the outward forms of moderation are observed and respected in human affairs; and unquestionably much is gained, when every decided injustice in international relations meets with as much opposition as it did at that time. According to this view, the condition of the states of Europe, from the renovation of Austria, the raising of the siege of Vienna, and the great reaction in England under King William, down to the

time of Maria Theresia, must always appear as one of the better epochs of history, especially if compared with that immediately preceding or shortly after following it.

For Europe this was a prosperous epoch; for Austria it was and is the most glorious. By the great Eugene, and by the like-minded, high-aspiring emperor Joseph the First, the old lofty idea of Austria was again set forth to the world in all its splendour; and in respect to geographical situation and relations, her more modern outline, formed after the conception of Eugene, was perhaps more fortunate and more advantageous than even in the time of Charles the Fifth. The idea of Austria was that of a power, whose mission above all it was—in close union with all other states, and aiming at grand and general objects, to the utter exclusion of all narrow principles of a petty and selfish policy—to be the centre of all civilized European states, to protect the ancient dignity and freedom of Germany and Italy, and in general to uphold universal justice throughout Europe.

The many great acquisitions which Austria fairly won, she now maintained by her victorious arms; but in a political sense, those acquisitions were to be cultivated, and by further improvement raised to a state of mature prosperity. Hence a government directing its chief attention to internal administration and well-being, such as the emperor Charles the Sixth's, was incontestably the most desirable and most beneficial. To this object, as long as he reigned, he devoted all his energies: he who in his youth had displayed in Spain and Barcelona such fiery activity, such steadfast, inflexible courage. It is to be regretted that he was often drawn away from this his favourite object by the manifold foreign relations, which the nice calculation of the balance of power among the different states rendered ever more complex and entangled. The more unfortunate occurrences towards the end of his reign are chiefly attributable to an error that several sovereigns of his house committed; the error of relying and basing his plans upon the treaties solemnly accepted, ratified, and sworn to by the other powers, much more than was deemed prudent by the sagacious Eugene, or than the result showed to be desirable. The first flourishing times of Eugene must be altogether regarded as the golden age of modern history. The alliance of the maritime powers with

Austria constituted, what indeed ought to be always the constitution of Europe, a true European confederacy for the maintenance of universal freedom and justice. But it came to pass only too soon, that this high idea was understood but by a few. Under Walpole's influence, and in the latter years of Charles the Sixth, the fluctuations of a dead balance of power were already substituted for the former high principle of confederacy and enthusiasm for European freedom and civilization. The perilous game of alliances perpetually and capriciously changed, such as preceded the war of the Austrian succession, marks the first stage of moral dissolution in all the existing relations of Europe.

Under the delusive veil of a dominant ceremonious morality, the internal decay of honour and of all principle was great and universal throughout Europe. Of this the conduct of the governments, especially of the German princes, on the death of Charles the Sixth, furnishes proofs, such as no reflecting mind can contemplate even at this day without pain and indignation. The heroic steadfastness, however, whereby Maria Theresa overcame all dangers, and maintained the dignity of her ancient throne, is too fresh and living in the memory of all the well-disposed to require any new description. Of all royal ladies, who in ancient or modern times have defended a throne with honour and dignity, it were not easy to find one, except Isabella of Castile, who, in all feminine and princely virtues as queen and mother of her people, can be placed at her side. Her actions best refute the policy of the Salic law, which excludes women from the throne. As a visible, living justice, to impersonate the law, to bear in themselves the unity of their people, such is the divine mission of kings. But as nature herself, in many touching examples, teaches us that nothing can surpass the power of a mother's love, in preserving and defending her children; so also history points out to us times and situations, in which this divine justice may be best upheld and made efficient by the strength of female virtue, by the true and tender feelings of a mother, combined with the sentiments and principles of a princely soul.

To seize all Europe, the world with all its relations at a glance, like Charles the Fifth,—this, the mission of a true emperor—Maria Theresa may have been unable to fulfil.

Well did she deserve, however, to be called a king, as the faithful Hungarians styled her, even by her masculine firmness. As mother of her people she will be honoured even in their latest memory.

Let us now turn from the general state of Europe, and from that of Austria, which had again become the centre thereof, to cast a glance at the internal condition of Germany, and at some productions of intellectual culture, which exerted an important moral influence.

Despite the state of weakness, to which Germany was reduced after the peace of Westphalia, during the latter half of the seventeenth century, yet, from the abundance of her internal resources, she soon after rallied. Even at the end of the seventeenth century, when all the German princes hurried to the rescue of Vienna, the national spirit of Germany displayed itself with a strength and dignity, that we could scarcely have expected at that period. The position which Germany held in Europe during the eighteenth century was very important, and in many respects the most commanding. Although most of her petty principalities, conformably with the constitution, were permanently kept on a peace-footing and defenceless, and thus more than half of her strength remained unapplied and undeveloped; yet, so great were her internal resources, that of the four great military powers of Europe, two belonged to Germany. Among many evils the war of the Austrian succession, and the seven years' war had at least this one good effect, that the military forces of Austria and Prussia were, through their mutual struggle, brought to such a degree of strength and perfection, that each of them singly was equal to any other power, and the two united would have been superior to all. Even in this respect Germany appeared once more in the eighteenth century, as in earlier times, the most powerful state of Europe. Her external splendour and influence were apparently at least increased by so many neighbouring kingdoms falling under the sovereignty of German families. On one of the first thrones of Europe, —in England, an ancient German house reigned with undisturbed security; in Poland the rule of the dukes of Saxony, though subject to vicissitudes, was brilliant. In Sweden, and still earlier in Denmark, a German family mounted the throne; in Russia also the reigning dynasty, although still

bearing its ancient name, became in reality, by repeated inter-marriages, German. But it was not a matter of dynasties only ; German modes of thinking, the German language and literature, acquired strong influence in Russia and Denmark, from their possessing German provinces, and in England, too, from the like cause, found at least a point of contact. How important, how beneficial would not German influence have been upon Europe, if all the germs of good, actually subsisting by reason of these advantages, had been cultivated and developed ! In the heart of Germany one of the chief princely houses, that of Prussia, by taking watchful advantage of external circumstances and by the energetic application of internal resources, raised itself to the royal dignity and speedily also to royal power. With less success did Bavaria, after the commencement of the eighteenth century, aim sometimes at the Spanish crown, and sometimes at the imperial dignity. Many of the German princes also were distinguished by brilliant intellectual powers. But all this outward show produced no real advantages, and had no beneficial influence,—the ambition of the princes was injurious to their country. England's connection with Hanover was not of a kind to be desirable to her, or truly beneficial in its consequences to Europe. The sovereignty of the Saxon family in Poland only served to increase the materials of discord and distrust in Europe and even in Germany. That Prussia, which had the most contributed utterly to destroy the old constitution of Germany, ever by her fluctuating policy prevented the substitution of a new and better system ; that the ambition of Bavaria more than once brought misfortune upon Germany,—the history of the last century teaches us only too plainly. Even Prussia's greatness was in itself excessive for a mere member of the empire, still more by the manner in which it was acquired was the German constitution shaken to its very foundations. When the whole of Northern Germany under the influence of Prussia and England separated from the emperor and the empire, in the seven years' war, that constitution was really dissolved and destroyed, a total separation seemed scarce avoidable. The very power, however, which first occasioned the division, by its never slumbering distrust, and by its hesitation at the decisive moment, prevented the separation from becoming complete, which perhaps in more than one respect might have been the most advantageous course.



To the character also and the mind of the nation the ambitious efforts of the German princes were injurious, and the more so from their so often seeking profit and fame in foreign connections. After the treaty of Westphalia the career of the German mind was unchangeably marked out. The old military power possessed by the nation in former times was restrained and fettered by countless bonds, the greater part of its internal resources were rendered unavailable. Whether ever a great employment of these resources should be again made, depended on the good or evil disposition of the princes, upon their being animated and guided by a noble love of glory or by vulgar ambition. It may also well be asked, whether the exclusive passion for military fame and influence was or might have been the most desirable for our country, or the most beneficial to Europe. Commerce and maritime power had taken another direction, the manufacturing industry of the Germans was still as ever, admirable in details; but whether it were ever possible to regain the advantages, which foreign countries had drawn from the misfortunes of Germany, must have appeared in the eighteenth century, as it still does, very doubtful. After her military power was cramped, her commerce diverted, and her manufactures thereby crippled, scarcely any career save the internal one of knowledge remained open to her restless, indefatigable industry—a quality which no enemy has ever denied to the German nation. To seek knowledge with unwearied fidelity, to gather learning of every kind, became now the characteristic aim, object, and calling of the German mind. Immediately after the treaty of Westphalia, this tendency is perceptible; but the after-effects of such a desolating war of necessity paralyzed not only material prosperity, but mind itself. Subsequently, when the energies of the country began to revive, it was of still more injurious consequence, that the ambition of the princes was turned towards foreign countries, and that a new civil war divided Germany in the long contest between Austria and Prussia. More than other nations, however, did the Germans display activity in this direction; and even after the dissolution of their national unity, German science and art exerted a European influence. And if this literature has never hitherto been used and applied by any of the great German sovereigns, as it might have been, yet its

effects will abide down to the remotest times. This restless, unwearied search for knowledge is the characteristic merit of the intellectual culture of the Germans. The intrinsic excellence of French literature, in its peculiar perfection—in the forms of language, and in vivid expressiveness—is by no means neutralized by the one-sided principles of some, or by its arrogant misuse by others; even so little is the variety and the solidity of knowledge, which distinguish the scientific and learned class in Germany above all other countries in Europe, neutralized by its palpable want of unity, or from such learning not at once appearing practical, and capable of immediate application to life. These defects in the intellectual culture of the Germans have hitherto originated more in their political circumstances than in the character of the national mind itself. The schism in religion, and the division into several states also, could not fail to exert an influence over mental cultivation. The weakness, the insignificance into which a great portion of the smaller German principalities had sunk, could produce no other result than a total indifference, even a certain contempt, for all that concerned the state and public life. Hence the exclusive tendency of the German mind towards science; its inclination to employ itself earnestly with the remotest objects, while the most immediate appeared so often urgently to need aid, and to require undivided attention.

Was it surprising that when the relations of the political constitution and of public life were so confined, a like spirit should at first prevail in science? That the fault lay in circumstances and not in the nature of the national intellect, is evinced by many indications. Even in the first period of weakness after the unhappy peace of Westphalia, Germany in Leibnitz could point to a man such as hardly any other country could at that time boast of. Like Hugo Grotius at an earlier period, he was a European scholar by the extent of his connections, the scope of his learning, and the influence he exercised. Although he generally wrote in Latin according to old custom, and also in French occasionally, and only once proved how admirably he could handle the German language when he chose, yet he belongs, nevertheless, not to Europe only, but emphatically to Germany, by the especial influence he there exercised, by the nature and quality of his mind, and by the epoch to which he belonged, and to which he was indebted for

his training. He flourished in that brilliant and happy epoch, the age of Eugene, when, by the alliance between England and Austria, universal freedom was maintained, a new spirit of toleration diffused, and minds, especially in Germany, aroused once more and stimulated. Great was Leibnitz by the vast scope of his knowledge, and still more by the use and employment he made of it. He it was who chiefly, nay almost alone, laboured to defend religion and to revive true philosophy, by combating the false philosophy and intellectual opposition which had already begun to raise its head, and which undermined faith in the first instance, and then all principles, morals, and institutions. This was precisely what the age most needed. If Leibnitz alone was unable wholly to avert the headlong torrent of infidelity and of intellectual anarchy and desolation, yet his great services must not therefore be underrated. His only defect, perhaps, was one which subsequently was general in the intellectual culture of the Germans. The too miscellaneous nature of his studies, the vast variety of his knowledge and learned pursuits were injurious to their strength and unity. His character, the use he made of his genius and his learning, may perhaps be best explained by a parallel drawn from the history of his own age. If it is allowable to compare men in such different spheres of action, and to place the thinker in juxtaposition with those two illustrious Austrian generals, who so admirably denote the spirit of their times, and the degree of strength to which Germany was gradually again rising ; if this is allowable, then would Leibnitz, as a scholar and philosopher, have far more of the wary art of Monteculi than of the daring greatness of his exalted friend and patron Eugene.

Poets and orators belong to their language and country, scholars in general only to science itself. A few, however, from their great influence on their age, or as the type and sum of its modes of thinking, belong not only to their nation, but to the world at large, and to the whole human race. Thinkers and scholars of this universal influence were in antiquity, Plato and Aristotle, and in the middle age in Germany, Albertus Magnus. Of historians and publicists there was among the Romans Tacitus ; and in the flourishing age of Italian literature, Machiavelli, not less distinguished by his daring genius than by the pernicious influence of his writings. After

the schism in religion, Hugo Grotius and Leibnitz were the greatest and the first to rise high above the confusion and the contentions of their time to a more comprehensive and pure philosophy of life, of law, and of faith.

Not less, although not in so favourable a sense, do the names of some French writers of the eighteenth century belong to general history. They formed at first a mere scientific opposition party, which was long gradually maturing, before it at last burst forth. What was the ultimate tendency of this party could not well be doubtful, when Helvetius amid general approbation represented a selfish sensuality, as the only reasonable creed, and all else to be mere prejudice; when Diderot, as the founder and centre of a society of authors, of whom many wrote anonymously, preached up undisguised Atheism. They attacked not only the Christian, or revealed religion in general, but also natural religion itself with a singularly passionate hatred, but yet systematically and not without a delusive appearance of historical learning. Yet more pernicious perhaps than the influence of those two writers, was that of Rousseau and Voltaire, precisely because they possessed higher qualities and greater talents. The captivating eloquence of the former was well calculated to seize on the hearts of the more generous. The wit, the poetic gifts, the variety of literary styles and of learning possessed by the latter contributed the more to diffuse the new revolutionary mode of thinking among the higher classes of society, as through him the new opinions were, in the form at least in which they were conveyed, connected with the older French literature, that was still so valued by the nation. Different as were otherwise their views, a destructive mode of thinking, subversive of all faith, morals, and social principles as well as of government, was common to them both. And how great was not the number of writers, besides the leading ones above named, who sought to diffuse the new doctrines by every mode of inculcation! Since the time when a host of sophists suddenly arose among the most refined nation of antiquity, and by brilliant eloquence, by wit, and the new arts of dialectic acuteness, held up to ridicule not only the creed and religious rites of the people, but also the purer doctrines of the philosophers, and even all morality and justice; so that in a short time the education and modes of thinking, even the

whole social organization, of the Greeks were changed, and thereby the downfall of their freedom brought about;—since that time, a like spectacle, such as was now exhibited in France, had scarcely been seen.

The political influence, therefore, of the literature and philosophy of France in the eighteenth century, the direction which public opinion ther took, became more and more dangerous from day to day. Very different was the case in England. Despite the agreement of many of their first principles, and although the English writers were often the source, whence the French party hostile to religion and the state drew their opinions; yet there, although appearances were similar, a totally different direction was taken. A kind of legal constitution,—a certain constitutional limitation, was introduced into the intellectual culture, the literature, and philosophy of England, as existed in her Government itself. The general feeling for the national well-being and for the principles necessary for its maintenance, placed all contending energies even in this intellectual and apparently free department in a steady equipoise, retained them there, and averted any dangerous outbreaks of a generally pernicious and revolutionary mode of thinking. Hence in England no such general moral dissolution could take place as in France. Whenever the growth of scepticism seemed to threaten danger to the chief buttresses of all social institutions, the principles of morality and justice, patriotic feeling was aroused, if not to strike at the root of the evil by deeper science, yet externally to support and uphold the quaking foundations of morality and religion by the assumption of some probability or hypothesis, so that the fabric of social life might not fall to the ground.

What the majority of the thinkers and scholars, or rather the national genius itself, had effected in England, Kant alone sought to bring about in Germany. He aimed at giving to scientific modes of thinking a permanent form and a constitution, as it were, such as would be conformable to the general well-being in all that concerns higher knowledge, life, and man. An attempt like this necessarily failed in Germany. Kant's philosophy, however, had at least the merit of counteracting the undisguised atheistical spirit and influence of the modern French literature, and at once directing attention to Leibnitz and the older and better philosophy in

general. Yet in many points the doctrines of the German philosophers were not unfavourable to the destructive principles of the age. This will surprise no one who examines them closely. To him it will be evident that, despite all apparent reverence for experimental knowledge and his faith in the supernatural, the inward spirit of this philosophy, under a somewhat different form, is no other than that giddy rationalism, which has shown itself to be the universal malady of the eighteenth century. Only in the German philosopher the evil issues deeper from the root, and has been developed into a far more scientific form. The founder of this philosophy himself, indeed, endeavoured in some degree to impose restraints upon this rationalistic fanaticism, and to set up certain constitutional limits, but the attempt was vain. In the passive condition of the greater part of Germany, in the absence of a compact constitution, and a united and energetic national spirit, nothing could be remoter from the national mind and the state of public opinion in Germany, than those constitutional limits which, through a sense of public utility and national well-being, have maintained the literature and philosophy of the English in an equipoise that may be tolerated. On the other hand, even if the worst doctrines of French philosophy found some adherents in Germany, they never effected here any immediate practical evil. As here intellectual culture and modes of thinking took no political direction whatever, a certain indifference rather to everything external, a certain impartiality of views, became prevalent. In this there was undoubtedly a risk of our becoming too readily reconciled to anything, too quickly content with anything, were we only free to give it a form of our own, and of being hence unable to offer a firm internal resistance to any dominant opinion imposed by external circumstances or by force. From the rationalistic fanaticism, no such destructive revolutionary frenzy could spring up in Germany as in France; but at the most, the anarchy which the circumstances of the times had already engendered, more and more prevailed in modes of thinking. A sort of philosophic voluptuousness has become the peculiar characteristic of the German mind. It is not that our literature is deficient in soul, or in moral sensibility, but only in strength and unity, unless altered

circumstances, with the awakened sense of our wants, shall introduce those qualities.

In the eighteenth century, philosophic modes of thinking exercised such great, such universal, and visible influence, even upon external history, upon the career and the destiny of states and nations, that this brief notice will certainly not appear misplaced.

In public opinion lay one deep cause of a general convulsion in Europe; and after the evil had reached a certain height, that convulsion could scarcely be averted. The other cause for revolution was in the change of the principles of policy in France, and in the new political relations of Germany, whose power was not less great than the rivalries in its bosom had been dangerous. The first preludes to the approaching outbreak were the suppression of the society of the Jesuits, the partition of Poland, and the American war. The flames first burst forth in the Netherlands and in Holland, precisely the countries where the political system of the eighteenth century took its origin, and was founded. The centre of all the greater events of that century is the well-known change in Austrian policy. Instead of the old alliance with England, which was the foundation of the glorious era of Eugene, a league with France was entered into after the plan of Prince Kaunitz. By this important event all the subsequent occurrences of the eighteenth century are to be explained; nay, even to understand the preceding ones aright, and in all their influence and effects, we must ever keep in mind the great change in public affairs brought about by that treaty.

To judge by results, the system of Prince Kaunitz appears, in many respects, pernicious. But it needs only a glance at the other European powers to show how entirely it sprang out of the then existing situation of Europe. The political system in France had, in like manner, been totally changed. Many French writers are inclined to regard the whole eighteenth century down to the revolution, as an epoch of progressive decay of French power. They are right in respect to the corruption of public opinion; there is much also to support their view, if we take the strength of their military land-force as the only standard; and even the court-intrigues, which in France became matters of notoriety, were

a symptom of weakness. But we shall form a very different judgment, if we look less to the external military fame than to the internal well-being and industrial prosperity. If, however, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, decay is plainly visible in more than one branch of the national economy, yet the cause thereof did not lie in the new political system itself, but only in the inability to carry it out altogether successfully; it was, in fact, a failure. Lewis the Fourteenth's protracted wars of conquest utterly ruined internal prosperity; hence the inclination of the court to a more pacific policy. It was not difficult to perceive, and, indeed, the older French history furnishes abundant proof, that France could gain but little real advantage by conquest, and dominion over neighbouring countries; and that her internal prosperity depended solely on her acquiring maritime power, colonies, and an extensive share of commerce. Towards this object the efforts of French policy were more and more directed during the eighteenth century. That in the pursuit of such an object, France would be led to the adoption of a far more peaceful policy; and would cease to be a conquering state, as under Lewis the Fourteenth, was in the very nature of things. For the material well-being of France such a policy was unquestionably the best, and it would probably have proved favourable to the peace of Europe, had it succeeded; had the system remained predominant. But it totally failed. England was at once taken as a model, and fought with as a rival. No happy frontier-line divided the possessions of the nations in the other quarters of the world, as was once the case with Portugal and Spain; on the contrary, the geographical intermixture of French and English colonies in the West Indies, in North America, and in the East Indies, furnished matter and occasion for perpetual disputes. The grasping enterprises of France, which appeared to have no other object than to seize upon the whole of North America, were the immediate occasion of the seven years' war, which was a double one, both by sea and land. At sea it proved decidedly unfortunate for France, and successful for England; for Europe it had no other consequence than the recognition of Prussia by Russia and Austria as one of the great powers of Europe, of which there were now four instead of three.



The efforts of France to acquire naval power and commercial greatness failed, not only from England's superiority in resources of this kind, but from the fact also, that this new system of mercantile enterprise was not well suited to the genius of the French. We need only scan the history of the French colonies written by their own writers, to perceive, at once, that the fickleness peculiar to the nation, as soon as it is left to itself, was the reason why their trade and colonies often again rapidly declined, or, at least, never attained that great and mature growth, which unflagging patience and persevering firmness conferred on the colonies and commerce of the Spaniards, the Dutch, and the English. It was not difficult to foresee, too, that this striving after naval and commercial greatness, unquestionably suited, and perhaps necessary as it was to the prosperity of France, must needs bring about an essential change, not only in her foreign, but in her internal policy. What part of a state indeed remains uninfluenced by its commerce (if it be an extensive one) and by its colonies? Perhaps, with a commerce as large as France desired, even a change in the constitution could have been scarcely avoided. But the government should not, with lax principles, have let a vague indefinite freedom spring up; it ought to have grasped the helm of state with a vigorous hand, and have remoulded the national character, so far, at least, as the new system of policy required. On the other hand, as in England, while greater latitude of freedom is conceded, the strictness of ancient forms is, at the same time, more rigidly maintained, so also should the government have guided public opinion with vigour, have crushed the dangerous opposition, and have even introduced a searching reform, in order to avoid revolution. For this policy the government was too weak; the new commercial system was the best adapted for the interests of the nation, but not the best suited to its character. The attempt to become a great commercial people had no successful result; the failure of the attempt was the immediate cause of the revolution, and the whole energy of the nation, after the great internal convulsions, was thrown into wars of conquest.

This was not to be foreseen. And who would not have gladly indulged the hope that in France, and consequently in Europe, a peaceable and equitable system would at last pre-

vail, not through the inclination or caprice of any sovereign alone, but through a new direction of the national energies.

If we look to England, we shall find there too reasons enough to explain the new political system of Austria. The alliance between England and Austria in Prince Eugene's time, was undoubtedly to be regarded as a natural, nay a necessary league for the maintenance of freedom in Europe. But had England always regarded it as such? Had she not too often substituted mere mechanical ideas of the equality and balance of power for the moral principles of universal freedom and justice? How much were not these fatal views laid open, even at the first peace, founded upon the glorious victories of Marlborough and Eugene! How much had not England been at fault before Maria Theresa resolved to act upon the new principles! The whole alliance, so glorious in its beginning, did not take such a turn as it ought to have done. Had England and Holland then become one power, or even one state, as at that epoch might have been easily effected by avoiding any violation of ancient forms, the influence of their power upon Europe would have been far more beneficial. England needed some continental possession; but Hanover could not adequately answer that end. Far from England becoming too powerful by such a union, France would rather then have found the means from the more dependent situation of Holland of securing that commercial equality and freedom of the seas, which she aimed at in her new system. The decline of Holland was the immediate result of the non-accomplishment of such a union, and the oppression of Holland the first fault which can be imputed to England. That England, after a completely successful war, allowed Spain to fall into dependence on France, may be to a certain degree excused by a concurrence of unfortunate accidents and circumstances. That she effected so little in the war of the Austrian succession, that she permitted the spoliation of that monarchy, whose maintenance and integrity should have been her first concern, betrayed the defects in her policy, otherwise so brilliant and successful.

Would it not, however, have been better, if instead of wholly changing her system, Austria had sought to maintain peaceful and friendly relations with the two great continental powers, and in the contest with Prussia had relied on her own

resources alone? The majority may indeed so judge, now that subsequent history has proved more than ever, that Austria is always strongest when she relies upon herself alone, and knows how to turn to full account her own resources. The king of Prussia, however, at the head of his army, was in truth a formidable foe; and at a period, too, when Austria still keenly felt the effects of many a loss, and when her strength was not nearly so fully dilated or developed, as was afterwards the case. And would not one of those great powers, if not allied with Austria, have infallibly taken the field against her? All these considerations are surely more than sufficient to justify the empress Maria Theresa against the censures cast upon her for adhering to a system, the idea of which assuredly did not originate with her. Neither did she sanction the suppression of the Jesuits without much hesitation, nor the partition of Poland without unwillingness. The former occurrence might, nay, must have led, to most essential changes in the internal constitution of all Catholic states; and by the latter a new policy in the international relations of Europe was established, which excited great apprehensions for the independence and security of all the smaller and weaker states. The period of stern, exclusive, all-ruling military power had now arrived; a system which often paid but little attention to the rights and claims of the less powerful nations, and could not be brought to maturity without occasioning much harshness and manifold oppression even in internal policy. By Prussia was this system first devised, and by her chiefly brought about. It is to be regarded as the second stage of that decomposition of Europe in the eighteenth century, which was now rapidly developing. As the first stage thereof we have before characterized the period, when a dead, artificial balance of power was made the substitute for the true European confederacy, that once existed for the maintenance of universal justice and political freedom. This period was denoted by the rapid alternation of alliances capriciously formed, and arbitrarily dissolved.

A happier epoch seemed once more approaching. In the latter days of Maria Theresa, when the newly enkindled naval war between France and England was unable to disturb the peace of the continent; when even Prussia's reawakened warlike jealousy of Austria respecting Bavaria was still peace-

fully appeased ; when the last king of France was ruling with a mildness hitherto unknown in that kingdom, and Prussia, countenancing a freedom of thought quite in accordance with the spirit of the times ; when from America, beyond the far seas, there resounded over to Europe the news of a young republic there flourishing in freedom, together with the admired names of a Franklin and a Washington—when the resources of civilized Europe, that had been gathering up during the long peace, were producing general prosperity ;—when after Maria Theresa's happy reign the Emperor Joseph's bold reforms and changes in the first years of his government were opening still wider prospects to view ;—in these times all hearts gave themselves up to the most boundless hopes of universal felicity for the human race, of a new glorious period under the empire of reason, and of unceasing progress in perfection and enlightenment ; all the military and political evils heretofore endured, were now to disappear for ever. Yet it was but a delusive hope, and the then apparently happy state of Europe was only that dangerous calm that often precedes the outbreak of a fearful storm. Even in the latter years of the emperor Joseph the Second occurred the first symptoms of the third and most dangerous crisis in the moral dissolution of Europe,—namely that of anarchy and of the revolt of nations.

From his circumstances and position, power, and innate faculties of mind, there was no monarch in Europe but the emperor Joseph the Second, whose mission it so eminently was to encounter the great contest of the age, and with a powerful hand to guide the changes now almost inevitable so as to insure general well-being. Yet of all the reflections, for which the history of his eventful life furnishes matter, not one so much presses itself on a thoughtful mind as the question, why a successful result so rarely crowned the designs of the emperor Joseph, his most eager wishes, and most strenuous efforts ?

Before we attempt to answer this question, as far as history enables us, we shall take permission to pause for a few moments to express the feelings, with which the prospect of the approaching catastrophe fills us.

Mutable and transitory is universal dominion. From its primitive seat, on the great rivers of Asia ; in the rich valleys

and hills of Persia,—it passed to the joyous, artistic people of Greece ; thence to grave Rome, in the centre of lovely Italy ; afterwards even more northward to the Germans, to Austria, and to Spain, to France, England, and Russia. States disappear ; the most powerful often bear within themselves, from their very origin, the germ of their own decay. Even nations change, although the time is passed, when wholly new ones arise. The life of man only remains ever the same as it was in the beginning ; his true life,—namely, the life of inward feeling. To-day as a thousand years ago, the unconscious beauty of the child is the type of a purer existence than the earthly one ; youth still feels itself seized with a soft melancholy feeling of uncomprehended love and anticipating hope. When this transitory bloom has passed away, an immense longing for restless action overpowers the breast of the man, not from idle vanity, not for the mere sake of a name, but from the full consciousness of power and the need to exercise and employ it. \* The events of the world thwart—accident interrupts the greatest plans ; misfortune at last outwearies even the steadfast, death or difference of sentiments separates friends. The best thing that is left for the mind of man, when he has enjoyed the riches of nature even to satiety, when he has been sufficiently exercised and proved by battling with the world, is in the evening of life to attain knowledge ; to see that clearly now, which had strengthened and guided him as an obscure feeling in the longings of his youth, and as a lofty faith in the more active career of manhood. This alone,—the development of the inward mental faculties, is life ; it becomes a more energetic and redoubled feeling, when many co-operate in such a life, and when this spiritual activity is not that of an individual, but of a whole family and large society. This life does not exist for the sake of the state and its artificial institutions, and as the mere material and instrument thereof, but rather is the state itself to be chiefly valued as good and useful for the sake of the development of that spiritual life in which, and not in itself, it has its object. If we look to the immediate object of the state,—it is unquestionably justice. Yet if, in reference to this object alone, we compare the situation of things in artificial states with the state of freedom, not such as some have fabled it to be, but such as it still exists

in some countries of Asia, and formerly prevailed in the greater part of Europe,—the state of things, where every one exercises his rights as his own master according to his sense of honour, to the hallowed customs of patriarchal authority, of hospitality, and even of the blood-feud,—if we thus compare them it may seem doubtful which state is to be preferred as regards the interests of justice or of individual welfare—the state of freedom or the artificial state. The latter generally attains its object but imperfectly, prevents indeed, or severely punishes the pettier evils of individual wrong, but introduces on the other hand evils of greater magnitude and of a more oppressive and destructive nature. What outweighs, however, all these evils and brings us to consider large and artificial states as salutary for mankind, is their necessity for the growth of all higher civilization. How had this been possible without that communion of earlier and later ages, of different nations, of remote countries, by which mankind first became a connected whole? Large, artificial states accomplish this, and thereby compensate for the other evils which they introduce. All else that is good and great,—every enjoyment and every feeling of life, is also possible in a state of freedom, except knowledge, which is accumulative. The mind of no one man of itself, and isolated, has ever been capable of discovering truth! The whole of the past, and much of the present acts upon each individual, although unconsciously, as soon as he enters within the circle of knowledge. Hence the necessity and the wholesomeness of the state lie not in what seems to be its immediate object, but in its remoter effects. It answers the higher invisible object of intellectual communion, the threads of which extend from the very beginning of the world's history, throughout all changes of condition and time, even to the final extinction of the human race. It is with mankind at large, as with the individual, with the world's history, as with life itself, the beginning and the end are dark, the middle alone is clear. As no one can remember the first awakening of his own consciousness; as the moment of final dissolution, often as we have contemplated it in others; and how it appears in some fearful, in others painful, as was their life; in others sublime as a visible transfiguration,—yet ever remains to ourselves a mystery,—so can no human eye penetrate to the beginning of

history, or to the remoter future thereof. Yet we need but extend our view but a little beyond the ages that immediately surround us, to no very remote distance, in order to perceive, that all the works and institutions of man cannot be otherwise in their essence than perishable, transitory, and destined but for a limited time, for one stage in the development of his mind.

The same holds good, likewise, in all the artificial arrangements and special institutions of the state. The state is not the only great society existing among men. Outwardly less strictly exclusive, but therefore more comprehensive, is the corporation of the church, and the association of commerce. Like every other art, political art has its impassable limits; and the eighteenth century has only too often mooted problems for humanity, which political art, properly so called, even the most comprehensive and perfect, has been of itself unable to solve. The narrowness of ordinary statesmanship is most strikingly evinced when it does not recognise these two great powers, the church and commerce, as independent of itself, and does not confine itself merely to fixing certain limits to their action on the state, but rather seeks, to its own essential detriment, to subjugate them entirely, and to incorporate them with itself.

To reflections of this kind, as to how far the institutions and productions of man are frail and perishable, and how far of permanent worth, the history of the latter half of the eighteenth century often gives occasion. In that brief space almost every state had to endure important changes and convulsions. Besides these special causes for political innovation, there was one of a more general kind. There existed an internal division not only in political science, but also in the spirit of the state, which took the form sometimes of a contest between the old and the new, sometimes of a struggle between two different modes of administration. We may best characterize this division by saying that the soul and body of the state were not in harmony, or rather that their just mutual relations were inverted. The older political institutions and political science reposed more or less upon the foundation of religion, of national manners,—in a word, upon moral springs of action. In the eighteenth century, a new political science arose, which calculated not upon the undefined working of moral springs of action, but

altogether upon the development of material resources. It was believed that, by the skilful adjustment and careful application of these resources, the artificial mechanism of political institutions might be most surely brought to perfection. This mechanical system of policy sprang chiefly out of commerce, whose influence now first began to be fully felt in Europe, and to increase and multiply most disproportionately the material resources and wants of the state. A secondary cause was the division of Europe into four great continental powers, if not altogether equal, yet each sufficiently powerful to aim at securing the first rank. From the mutual rivalry of these great powers it became the first object of the new political science to expand the material resources of the state to the uttermost, and by the most strenuous efforts to raise them to the highest pitch. The smaller states followed this example. Not only their internal, but their foreign policy, was thereby totally changed. In their home policy, unbroken uniformity was the object, even where law, and custom, morals, and moral considerations and restraints, stood in the way. Abroad, to attain the rounding off and isolation of the state, none of the sacrifices or exertions would be considered too great, which in earlier times would have been much more readily made for the sake of honour and justice, of public opinion, of religion, or of any other moral motive, than for any trifling acquisition of territory. That extreme exertions of strength lead to exhaustion was repeatedly shown in the great continental wars of the eighteenth century. As money was wanting to employ the forces so painfully collected, war became dependent upon finances and subsidies to a degree before unknown. As a proof how mere calculation must fail, where ultimately all depends upon courage, mind, and will, upon moral energies, we may refer to the state of confusion into which the finances fell in most countries, although they were regarded as the chief concern of public policy, and obtained the exclusive attention of the statesman. Hence some writers have described this new method of calculating the physical resources of a state, political economy, and the administrative system, guided by and based upon statistical principles and tables, as a really fatal science, as the main source of the evils that have befallen Europe. This, however, is to confound the



thing itself with its abuse. We might as well attribute the atheistical modes of thinking of the last century to admirable advances made in physical science, which has often, although very innocently, it is true, occasioned or favoured a superficial scepticism.

The evil lay not in the artificial calculation and the employment of the physical resources of the state, but in the inversion of the true order of things,—in the subordination or the utter sacrifice of moral to material interests,—so that the spirit of the state by degrees became extinct; while these politicians sought to perfect the body thereof, not as a living body, but as a dead machine. Great and glorious is the abundance of material resources, so long as they minister to the soul; ruinous, however, when in these resources, the soul is stifled and forgotten. The evil lay not in commerce, and not in luxury considered in themselves, nor even in standing armies and increasing taxes, nor in political economy and statistics; but in the fact, that as the new political economy was perfected, and acquired greater influence, the moral motives lost more and more their force. The primary cause of this relaxation of moral feeling was the indifference and false wisdom, which sprang out of the Reformation. That this mere mathematical view of the state and of political economy however, aspiring to obtain ascendancy, tended to undermine the moral edifice of civilization and of human society; that such an exclusively mathematical and merely material view, in opposition to the moral one, constituted the peculiar essence of the new political system, and of all the revolutions to which it gave rise, and that the seductive name of freedom was only a delusive veil—all this is evident enough.

Of all the states of Europe which first experienced convulsions, Poland, Sweden, and Holland possess fewer claims on our attention, because those revolutions sprang not from domestic causes, but were directed for the most part by foreign influence. England and Russia were in part indebted for their great strength in the eighteenth century to the circumstance, that they had already gone through their revolution, and were thereby secured from new convulsions. When her civil contests were over, England had succeeded in establishing a happy balance between the ancient forms and moral principles of her constitution, and the modern commercial

wealth and the new interests and relations to which it gave rise. This balance, as a mere artificial arrangement, would not have been durable, had it not been permanently supported and upheld by the genius of the nation. In Russia all the powers of the state, moral and material, were at least concentrated in one hand, so that any great internal discord was thereby prevented, and a form of government established, which, powerful without and secure within, although not entitled to unqualified praise, was yet adapted to the genius and to the circumstances of the nation.

The convulsion was altogether a universal one. The prevailing giddy rationalism had seized not only on the nations, but on the governments also. In many countries, it is true, the adherents of the new system of political materialism succeeded in exciting the people to a fanatical sympathy with what was in truth repugnant to their inmost feelings and ancient faith. In other states, however, hostility to this new mechanical policy, as well as attachment to the ancient moral system, more congenial as it was to the national manners, were the cause of considerable popular movements and general resistance. As a proof how much the general causes of these convulsions existed, not in this or that state only, but in the age and its peculiar circumstances, we may observe, that the attempt to introduce among the nation the least disposed towards new political ideas, the Turks, a new military system more mechanically perfect, and which the general rivalry of all civilized nations seemed to render necessary, have led in our days to no inconsiderable commotions and catastrophes. Two only of the greater Protestant states remained in the first instance altogether free from the general agitation that pervaded Europe. In these states, together with the old order of things, even the constitution of parliamentary estates had been long utterly abolished, and hence no essential obstacle to the new system remained—nothing was left to be destroyed. In the larger Catholic states the agitation was necessarily far greater, and greatest of all in France and Austria. Spain, by her exclusion of all foreign influence, by her internal simplicity, was, in the first instance at least, better guarded against revolution; Italy, and the smaller German states, depended on France or Austria.

The germ of the revolution in France lay more immediately

in the fluctuations between the military and the commercial systems, which produced even in finance the opposite systems and parties for manufactures and for agriculture. The European revolution, however, did not first break out there, but in another state. In Austria the heterogeneous composition of the monarchy itself furnished an opportunity for many reforms and necessary changes ; they were precipitately introduced and undertaken by the powerful mind of the Emperor Joseph, who was absolutely ruled and carried away by the spirit and by the doctrines of his age.

Who more than the Emperor Joseph seemed destined not to be hurried away by the spirit of the age, but to govern it and to guide its just movements with a steady hand ? For, besides the requisite energy and understanding, no one was so firmly convinced that he only sought right, and no one possessed a will so resolved and constant. The question has been before proposed, wherefore were these great hopes nevertheless unfulfilled, wherefore did Joseph's illustrious successor acquire the reputation of distinguished wisdom, and in part, too, by the rare union of firmness and conciliation with which he revoked a portion of his predecessor's projects and measures ? With the answer to this question, as far as it is furnished by history, I shall conclude these lectures. In doing so I shall only take the general point of view. The details of the Emperor Joseph's plans, principles, and measures, the manner in which they were in part, but in a small part only, fitly carried out, in part revoked, in part left incomplete and half-executed, are still rather a theme for intense, immediate, and animated discussion, than a subject for the calm meditations of history.

Most writers assign the emperor's rashness, his desire to reap the fruit as soon as he had sown the seed, without leaving time for its silent growth, as the general cause of the imperfect success of his measures. Easily as this tendency may be explained by Joseph's position, education, destiny, and character, correct as the remark may therefore in general be, yet it does not account altogether for the failure of his plans. Not all useful reforms can be brought about in a state of themselves without active co-operation, and merely by biding one's time. Many changes, when once they are acknowledged to be good and wholesome, can only be effected

at once or not at all, and in such cases conciliatory forms cannot always be observed.

It appears to me that it was Joseph's neglect to win over and guide public opinion, that created the principal obstacles to his measures, and often hindered their success. It would be superfluous to expatiate on the great obstacles, the often insurmountable difficulties, this omission threw in his way in the Netherlands and in Hungary, in the Catholic church, and among Protestant powers in his own kingdom, and in Europe at large.

His enemies knew how to take advantage of this omission. So it happened, that he, who first destroyed the old forms and rights of the constitution of Germany, started up as the protector of German freedom, using the high-sounding name of a confederation of princes, as was done in earlier times by other foes of the empire, and of the German name. Hence, this worn-out farce, with all its scandalous gravity, again found credence among our too-well disposed and credulous nation, and the enemy was able to bring public opinion decidedly over to his side.

Even in regard to religion the emperor Joseph's intentions were entirely mistaken and erroneously judged. The society of the Jesuits was suddenly overthrown by a blow prepared in secret, while the jealousy of the other religious orders contributed to their downfall. This society, long after other ecclesiastical institutes had sunk into utter inactivity, had continued efficient and ever active for the weal of the church, both in Europe and in the other quarters of the world; and by their services to science and to education, best corresponded to the spirit of the age, and satisfied its wants. What other order could now reasonably hope to remain altogether unchanged, to be alone made an exception? What changes in the ecclesiastical constitution could still appear impracticable, or even arduous, after the enemy had once succeeded in inflicting so great a blow?

Certain reforms were unavoidable; and how wholesome might they not have proved, if the innovators had not been merely content with destroying and sweeping away old institutions, but had founded in their place new ones, had rightly discerned and comprehended how much good was to be found in existing establishments, had restored all that was paralyzed

and degenerate to its original functions, and had vigorously stimulated activity, reanimated mind, and given a new organization to ecclesiastical institutes more suited to the altered circumstances of the times. This would have been really a reform; and undoubtedly it would have been a hard and toilsome work. The lighter task, mere destruction, without substituting ought in its place, was better suited to the spirit of the age. Were we to ascribe to some of the less intelligent advocates of these new church reforms a weight, to which, indeed, they are not entitled, we should almost believe, that it had been the object of their authors to bring about an unnatural fusion of the Catholic and Protestant creeds, or even to separate from the Catholic church altogether, and to establish a sort of special, Austrian, national Christianity. All this was quite alien to the emperor Joseph's strong understanding, and equally so to his sound sentiments. Those who have described him from intimate personal knowledge, have sufficiently proved that, in this respect, his own sentiments and convictions were thoroughly right, and conformable to religion. Any single measure which may be cited, as apparently proving the contrary, is either in itself of little importance, or did not originate with him, but in the misunderstanding and exaggerations of functionaries, or in the influence of counsellors, to whom the most sagacious and self-relying monarch cannot avoid intrusting details.

It were superfluous to refer to all the points, on which the emperor Joseph has been in a like manner misjudged; for he had many enemies, and he had himself neglected to win public opinion. This neglect is the more to be lamented, as public opinion soon acquired a power so great and formidable, and almost exclusively governed the age. How many means, too, stood at his command to influence public opinion, to become the pilot of that age, and to steer it towards the haven of universal well-being! He, the offspring and heir of Maximilian, and Charles the Fifth, the successor of Matthias Corvinus, emperor of Germany, sovereign of the French and German Netherlands, protector and lord of the most refined and industrious provinces of Italy—a man, too, of penetrating mind and restless energy and activity; well versed in the useful sciences; familiar with the various countries and peoples of Europe from personal observation; master of so many

languages ; in personal intercourse so attractive and irresistible ; he, we say, ought to have swayed the minds of all men, and have been the saving genius of Europe, by imposing silence on the storms that were menacing her with destruction.

It would, moreover, have had a beneficial influence on his own mind, had he placed himself in living contact with public opinion, and had he watched and studied it more. He would not then have confounded the one-sided theories and transitory systems of individual writers with the measures really required by the general wants and by the new circumstances of the age. This has been objected to his views on some points of legislation and internal administration.

The emperor Joseph sought the same thing, with far more energy and decision, it is true, but still precisely the same thing, as did most of the sovereigns of the eighteenth century—the internal unity, namely, of his own states, and their rigid isolation from others. The latter was unsuited to the peculiar nature of the Austrian state. That monarchy, from its very situation, can scarcely be an isolated kingdom ; as the heart and central point of Europe, it was brought by this its original destination into the closest connection with the most important countries, and from all times was emphatically a universal and truly imperial state, and such in all probability it will never wholly cease to be. This isolation of the state, and its self-seclusion within its own frontiers, even in itself of doubtful policy, was utterly impracticable as long as the sovereign of Austria was at the same time emperor of Germany.

Union, on the other hand, between all the separate parts of the empire, and especially a closer connection between Hungary and German Austria, was unquestionably a great and most desirable blessing. But it was not a mere mechanical uniformity in external forms of administration, it was not a mere material fusion, that was to be wished for ; but chiefly that the old moral ties which linked Hungary and Austria together might be drawn closer, and be more generally recognised. The matter will be best explained by an illustration. The greatest of the Emperor Joseph's ancestors, Charles the Fifth, reigned over a monarchy which, if possible, was composed of more various elements than Austria was in the

eighteenth century. 'Of all the admirable institutions which that great monarch founded, not one perhaps was so profoundly conceived as the organization he gave to the body of Spanish grandees, and the spirit he inspired it with. By it the greatest and most powerful men of the entire nation were formed into a brilliant and dignified senate around the throne. Castile and Arragon became thus for the first time fully united without any fatal fusion of their material interests, without any illegal destruction of their special privileges. The Netherlands also and Naples became thereby closely linked to the ruling country, for the leading men in either could aspire to that high dignity. Hence the unity and internal grandeur of the Spanish monarchy. While Italian civilization, science, and art flourished in Spain, the military power and the state policy of the Spaniards, which was based upon the loftiest ideas, predominated in Italy, and raised that country from the state of corruption into which it had allowed itself to sink. And while the Spanish language and manners struck deep roots in the Netherlands, the high-minded emperor did not think it beneath his dignity to seek opportunities for introducing the Flemish-Burgundian costume into Spain. It may be said that in that exalted model is contained a law available for every state composed of heterogeneous parts. While the well-being of each particular country, according to its character, peculiar rights and customs, language, and old traditions, was intrusted to the care of the respective estates and assemblies, the unity of the empire was best and permanently secured by encircling the throne with a senate formed out of the grandees of each nation.

As regards Hungary, the objections to the emperor Joseph's reforms should not at least be drawn from the existing constitution. How is it possible that, while in Europe everything was changed, in Hungary everything should remain as it was five hundred years ago. Matthias Corvinus and St. Stephen changed much in their time, and somewhat arbitrarily too, abolished old institutions and established new ones, and yet are venerated by the nation itself as great kings. From the energies of his mind, the emperor Joseph may have well felt himself called to achieve a like task. But unhappily, by the manner in which that work was executed, minds were irritated, and, together with the reforms found objectionable

and actually rejected, others, truly necessary and wholesome, fell also to the ground.

Of all the political changes and innovations which the present times have brought about, or striven to bring about, the nobility, its exclusive privileges and original functions, form the real centre. This is the case where the revolutionary movement has been treated as a mere subject of calm investigation, or where its solution has been the especial object of a most violent contest. In describing the different periods of modern history, I have throughout characterized the nobility as the fundamental power of the state, permanent under all changes of external form. Hence a few remarks in illustration of the principle will most appropriately conclude these lectures. I have but one question now to answer, what new form and shape of nobility will arise out of the great changes that occurred at the end of the last century? A complete answer I will not attempt, as the matter does not yet belong to history, but is involved in actual contention, and is in the crisis of its development; but the following may serve by way of indication, and may stimulate reflection.

The movement of the age clearly reveals itself as a contest between the old and the new. The nobility have generally had the mission to be champions of the old; this they have felt, and have accordingly performed many glorious feats in fulfilment of this calling. But it is not sufficient to love and defend the old merely as such, and because it is old. History teaches us that the essence of nobility consists not in any particular privilege or external form, whatever these may be. On the contrary we learn from history (and this I have taken pains to point out), that the forms of nobility have often changed, but that in its essential functions that institution, under the most various forms and special external privileges, has ever remained invariably the same. Culpable are the views of those partisans of novelty, who seek only to destroy old constitutions, and who believe that anything really new is to be found here or there, in this or that system, as the discovery of an individual. What is really new never arises, is never brought about through an individual, however great be his intellect or power, but through the general progress of mankind, or to speak more correctly, through the action of Divine Providence. On the other hand, that defence of the old order



of things is alone right 'which enters into the spirit and the lofty sentiments of antiquity, and is ever penetrated with those feelings. This is the high calling of the nobility, and therefore no nobility that is not also a nobility of mind will encounter with success the contests of the age.

In Germany, where it took its origin, and especially in Austria, has the aristocratic constitution of modern Europe struck the deepest root. In the great empire of the north, which connects Europe and Asia, everything is rigidly subordinated to an unlimited monarchical sway. In the western countries, originally Roman provinces, the German aristocratic constitution could not take such deep root, but that long before our times, many popular reactions, many attempts to expel or essentially to alter it, actually occurred. In Germany and in Austria lies the chief seat of the old Germanic nobility, and according to the spirit that animates it, will its strength grow or decline. A nobility that were not national, that sought only to be the prop of the throne, and not to be also the chief strength and the flower of the nation, would thereby proclaim its own defectiveness, and could only be animated by an utterly degenerate spirit.

The destructive poison that in our age is slowly consuming states and peoples as well as individuals, is not merely apathy, selfishness, and insensibility, it is a positive evil,—it is the spirit of falsehood—that not only in the writings of the sophists, and in their false enlightenment, but also in public life, in the dealings and conduct of individuals, scatters plague and destruction around. This spirit of falsehood, truth only, the truth full and entire, can subdue. To her we are led by the earnestness of intrepid conviction, and by that higher knowledge which is founded on God, and before which all the vain fanaticism of reason disappears.

# CÆSAR AND ALEXANDER;

AN HISTORICAL COMPARISON, 1796.\*

WHEN Julius Cæsar, in the capacity of a quæstor, came to Gades in further Spain, and beheld there, not far from the

\* As the idea of the beautiful is the ruling principle and the divinely positive both in the arts and life of the Greek people, and forms the central, vivifying point of all Hellenic civilization, so in like manner it is the idea of the great, which defines everything in the Roman national contest for supremacy as likewise in the historical development of the Roman character. This idea everywhere dominant gives this tone, though in an altered shape, to every period of Rome's history. The great, indeed, belongs more to nature than to art, and it is easy to observe that the Romans, even in that department of the artificially beautiful in which they were the most successful, namely in architecture, carried over this beautiful more into the naturally great. Greatness of character also is founded more upon the force of nature than on the inner sense and life of a moral mind, when such greatness, as was the case with the Romans, does not proceed from a mental disposition, that only seeks what is divine, but maintains itself and martially opens a passage for itself with undaunted firmness in the struggle of rude unnurtured reality. Now, since the Romans by their complete and free development of such a great natural force, as also by their pre-eminent clearness of understanding, stand on precisely the same line with the Greeks, though, it is true, widely separated from them; because that idea of the beautiful, that genuine sense of the artist, in point of fact was never born in the Roman mind; there has hence been always a peculiar historical charm to compare the one nation with the other, or to select congenial characters from both for comparison. The highest summit of such parallels is formed unquestionably by the two great conquerors, to the analysis of whose characters this essay is devoted; for their historical influence has been, beyond all that resembled them, the most comprehensive and of the most lasting results down to the most recent times. Each of ~~them~~, too, Cæsar as well as Alexander, marks the decisive epoch of a universal revolution in manners, mind, and mode of thinking, of a totally changed state of things for both nations. The author, at the time when he endeavoured to do justice to his subject, was prompted by a proper appreciation of its importance; but being then still young, he claims indulgence for any youthful embarrassment in the style or mode of discussing the theme, this being his first attempt of the kind.

temple of Hercules, the statue of Alexander the Great, he sighed deeply ; he felt a sickening disgust, as it were, at his own torpor, and that he had, as yet, achieved no one glorious act, at an age when Alexander had already subdued the world. He immediately solicited leave of absence, that he might seize in Rome the first opportunity presenting itself for greater undertakings. Soothsayers found in his dreams of the ensuing night the signs of future undivided empire over the earth ; any eye not purblind could divine his wishes. With this sigh, with this return to Rome, an entirely new period begins in the life of Cæsar, and it extends to the passage of the Rubicon.

It was Cæsar himself, therefore, who placed himself by the side of Alexander ; and what was more natural than that they should have been since often compared together ?

“For sublimity of conception, rapidity in conquering, endurance in danger,” says the precious Velleius (with whom the true Cæsar already begins to merge into the Divus Julius of the later Romans), “Cæsar, sprung from the noblest race of the Iuli, was the first of his countrymen, so likewise for beauty, talent, and prodigal liberality. His greatness surpassed nature and the belief of mankind ; but it strongly resembled that of the great Alexander, when the latter was sober and not in a passion.” Plutarch also has introduced this mighty pair among his parallel lives ; but happily for us, in this instance, he has spared us the comparison itself.

Those who are fond of such details may indemnify themselves in Appian, who compares the two conquerors of the world by a tedious long string of similarities, either quite superficial or wholly accidental ; such as only an historical sophist could so ornamentally describe, and so wonderfully explain. Plutarch himself would hardly have surpassed him. By his fondness, indeed, for snapping up every trivial likeness or contrast, such a host of comparisons might have thoroughly disgusted a Plutarch. Thus he remarks, not without astonishment, among other things, that the four bravest, but craftiest commanders, Philip, Antigonus, Hannibal, and Sertorius, were all of them blind of one eye. We really ought not to be surprised, if the thought had occurred to him of bequeathing to us a parallel history of these four one-eyed heroes.

To examine thoroughly the peculiar nature of a great man, it is much rather incumbent upon us to consider him for himself alone, in his connection with what is around him, in his own sphere and age; to confine our view to him, nor allow it to be diverted, at least for the time, by any secondary object. It is all well and good, if we wish to admire upon the whole, but if we desire to appreciate accurately the intrinsic merit or demerit of a hero, it is then very advantageous to throw also into the other scale of the balance some mighty counterpoise. In that case we must not attempt to couple together the productions of different ages. Thus we should never compare the heroes of ancient with those of modern history, since we only incur the danger of losing sight of the essential, if we snap at a vain shadow of resemblance. On deeper investigation, we are sure to light upon original differences, which render all comparison impossible; for the laws, limits, relations, of ancient and modern civilization, so widely diverge, that we may regard ancient and modern history as two independent worlds, even should they lock into each other. Real merit is everywhere the same, but the standard for estimating it in the ancients and moderns is yet entirely different. Not so with the comparisons between the Greeks and Romans; these are citizens of one and the same world, and the comparison of individuals from among them places in a clearer light the general character of these two ancient nations, whom a common and entire civilization divided so unequally. Hence, also, many of Plutarch's parallels are so fortunate and instructively amusing.

Cæsar and Alexander, a mighty pair; the two mightiest and at the same time worthiest rulers in all antiquity! Both accomplished so much, such an immensity, that we should have to write books upon them, if we wished to portray only what was most remarkable. The proper records for Cæsar's history belong in themselves to the most accomplished writings of antiquity; here is pure unadulterated gold, and we have not here to part it first from the dross. On the other hand, the principal sources for the history of Alexander flow so turbid, the traces nearly obliterated at the side are so scattered, and often so imperceptible, that the acumen of the investigator is by this very circumstance excited. If we would not here simply repeat what has been

already so often said, we must either be discursive in the extreme, or very concise. I have preferred brevity, and shall only observe the most important features. I shall give only a judgment with examples, not a history.

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“Cæsar,” said Cato, “has alone amongst all plotted to overthrow the state with sober deliberation.” Cato was perhaps the only one of his time who saw through the grand enemy with the same sober reflection. Even as a youth Cæsar had this clear-headed penetration, nor was he to be dazzled by the most glittering appearance. He happened to be in Asia when he heard of Sylla’s death, and he hastened back with all speed to Rome, building his hopes on the new schism created by Lepidus. Although enticed by great conditions, he nevertheless formed no connection with Lepidus, partly because he did not trust to the skill of that person, partly because he did not find the occasion so favourable as he had expected. During the maturity of his manhood he had learned to wait cautiously both for the opportunity and the moment, then to seize it rapidly and resolved, to use it also completely, and in this he was unmatched. He fought his battles not merely after a plan, but also when quite unprepared, whenever a favourable opportunity suddenly presented itself, often in spite of fatigue and weather, for the purpose of taking his enemy more unawares. It is doubtful whether he was bolder or more prudent. At the fitting moment he dared what was most desperate, but he never prodigally wasted his valour. He reserved it for those cases where his men required such excitement, and he would send away the horses, his own first, to deprive even himself of the means of flight. Then his example, more effective from its very rarity, and especially the equality of danger, did wonders. The most appalling danger never robbed him of his presence of mind, unexampled constant success never made him heedless and over-confident in war. On the contrary, he gained his most brilliant victories precisely when all believed him inevitably lost ; the oftener he conquered, the more reserved he was on coming to an action. In short, not a single instance will be found of his having neglected the right moment, or only partially profited by it, or of being found unprepared and irresolute when that moment arrived. This was so natural to him, that the contrary

in others seemed strange to him. \* When he was worsted at Dyrrhachium and not pursued, he said, "Pompey knows not how to conquer." He never beat the enemy without at the same time storming his camp; he never gave those that had lost heart time to rally. It is very remarkable, how candidly he often recognizes the wondrous effect of the moment, the wilfulness of fickle fortune. This modesty has a peculiar charm in the mouth of a hero who relates everything in which he was successful, by great exertion or by any deep stratagem, with such evident delight, and with the expression of joyous cheerfulness. He had accomplished so much by his own understanding and force alone, that he had no need to begrudge her share to Fortune, who, by the favour she showed him, confirmed an old Roman adage.\*

Considering the then universal debauchery of the Roman nobles, and Cæsar's sensuality in other respects, it is not unimportant that he even, in the literal sense, was so abstemious and sober; his very enemies could not deny that he was excessively moderate in the use of wine. It is also more important, that he himself laid a certain value on this abstemiousness, which in itself is nothing peculiarly rare, for in his invective against Cato he inveighs against him for having, among other things, got drunk from the Socratic goblet after the old Catonic fashion.† I should not like to assert that he, as perhaps Augustus did, feared lest he should grow too open-hearted and communicative. This species of dissimulation was alien to him; he knew quite as little of fear as of shame. He is in this respect without parallel; a despotic conqueror, who was frank and devoid of all distrustful apprehension. When conspiracies and nocturnal meetings were discovered, he struck no blow beyond showing, by an edict, that they were known to him. So void of apprehension, so heedless was his life, that after his death there were many who could believe he had intentionally not avoided the daggers of conspirators, from over satiety of life; he was hence not keen-sighted through fear. When perpetual dictator of the Roman republic, the deified companion‡ of the god Quirinus, in the midst of his triumphs, he never lost the

\* Fortes fortuna juvat.

† Narratur et prisci Catonis

Sæpe mero caluisse virtus.

‡ Quirini contubernalis.

power of judging men with his wonted perspicacity. "Shall I be so foolish," he said, "to doubt still how deeply I am hated, when Marcus Cicero has to wait so long in the ante-chamber till I am at leisure to speak with him? It is true, that if any one is little sensitive, he is that one, and yet I doubt not that he hates me from the bottom of his heart." After Brutus had declaimed with great fire and freedom for Deiotarus, he said, "Much depends on what this Brutus wants; but whatever he wants, he is earnest in his want." What is related about his foreboding concerning the prophetic leanness of Cassius is well known.

Still more does the mode of his death evince an almost unexampled presence of mind. "This is force," he exclaimed, when he was first seized, and "Cursed Casca, what art thou at?" and then rapidly wounded Cassius. As soon, however, as he saw the drawn daggers pointed at him from all sides, he veiled his head with the toga, drawing down the garment at the same instant with his left hand, that he might fall with decorum. The chaste modesty of a dying Polyxena must not be attributed to the grey-haired emperor, for nothing was less akin to him than such superfluous sensations. It had become a second nature with him not to be inactive for a single instant; as soon, therefore, as defence was useless, he devoted the little time and strength still left him for external decency, for which too during his whole life he had always displayed an almost excessive care. This he did not from any desire to please or any peculiar love for the beautiful, but because he loved, whether in the greatest or smallest things, the most exact propriety for its own sake alone, hating everything clumsy and deformed. Even when emperor he wrote a grammatical work, that was prized and quoted long after his death; for as he had much to write and to speak, it was impossible for him also here as in other things to stop short of perfection. For this reason he could not endure the pernicious confusion of times and seasons, and so regulated the calendar. His own bald head, so much derided, was for the same reason odious to himself also, and no honour did he seize with greater avidity, than the privilege of always wearing a laurel crown.

It was the perfect harmony of his powerful understanding, and of his equally great vigorous activity, from which that

sobriety and abstemiousness arose, giving him so decided a superiority over his antagonists. Cato alone resembled him in this ; but then he was as an enemy no match for him, because he could only use lawful means. This sobriety is properly the characteristic quality of Cæsar, distinguishing him greatly from Alexander, who, though he at first loved wine as a zest to jovial society, soon did so to extravagant excess for its own sake, who was seldom sober, and even then rash and furious as a drunken man. The Greek conqueror was wont to cut, not untie, all knots as he did the Gordian, and often would force and brave what was impossible in wild opposition to fortune. That question is hence answered, spontaneously indeed, which old authors have often started, which of the two would have been the victor, the sober or the drunken hero, if they had fought with equal means against each other for supremacy.

There is no doubt that Cæsar had also passions besides those, which carried him to his goal ; ignoble passions, which might have easily turned aside or totally confused his grand and simple career. He had the talent, however, of subduing them, for during his manhood all his powers really obeyed rapidly and infallibly his imperatorial understanding. In his youth he could burst into a tempest of rage. He defended a client against King Hiempsal so zealously as to seize, in the heat of the debate, Juba, the king's son, by the beard, for which the latter, during the civil war, as one of the warmest and mightiest of Pompey's partisans, gave him a great deal of trouble. His youthful adventure with the pirates throws strong light on his strong natural proneness to revenge. On his passage to Rhodes, where he intended devoting his leisure to Apollonius, the most celebrated teacher of rhetoric in that age, he was captured by them and compelled, to his great vexation, to pass forty days with them, attended only by a physician and two servants, for his other attendants and slaves he had immediately despatched as soon as he was taken, to fetch money for his ransom. When the money was paid, and he was set on shore, he contrived, notwithstanding he at that time had no official rank and power, to collect a fleet on the following night, sailed to the spot where the pirates were, put to flight a part of their fleet, took some ships, and made a great many of the crew prisoners, whereupon he returned to his friends rejoicing at the noc-



turnal victory. He gave the prisoners immediately into custody and hastened to Asia to the proconsul Junius, for the purpose of obtaining full powers to punish the prisoners as he might think proper. Upon the refusal of the latter, who said he should sell the prisoners, Cæsar hastened back with incredible speed to the coast, before the letters of the proconsul could arrive there, and caused all that he had taken to be crucified, exactly as he had often threatened them in jest ; a revenge deeply meditated, but petty, and not even prudent, for when he shortly after was obliged to hasten back to Rome, he was exposed to the greatest danger, because those pirates at that time completely ruled the sea. , It makes us shudder, as we read, that it was accounted a great act of clemency on his part to have the prisoners put to death before crucifying them, for he had sworn an oath to do that. Clement enough, it must be confessed, for a young Roman and a future conqueror of the world to boot ! Such simplicity in destroying his enemies and gratifying his vengeance certainly reveals a certain great manner in it, that distinguishes a Cæsar from the crowd of common tyrants, whose refined cruelty properly betrays childish passionateness and disgusting impotence of soul. The former will also be capable, as soon as his mind resolves upon it, of utterly renouncing all desire of vengeance, and of obliterating his hatred to the minutest trace, as the placable Cæsar really did when he arrived at a mature age. His so-lauded clemency in the civil war and during his rule was a deeply meditated plan ; the power with which he carried it out, the perseverance with which he remained steadfast and true to it, cannot in good sooth be sufficiently admired. We must not, however, attribute this to his good heart, nor is any feeling whatever of respect for duty and right as existing in him to be thought of. I confess I have no deep faith in the natural clemency of a revengeful conqueror, of whom it has been so expressly vaunted, that he far surpassed the most renowned shedders of blood, for that it did not even cost him a resolution to execute the most dreadful cruelty itself, provided it were only expedient. " In this manner," he writes to his confidential friends, " we will, if possible, attempt to gain the good will of all, and obtain a lasting victory ; for the others, by their cruelty, could not escape universal hatred nor maintain the victory long, if we

except Sylla alone, whom I do not intend to imitate. This shall be an entirely new mode of conquering—our arming ourselves with mildness and clemency. How this may be possible much occurs to me now, and much more may be obtained by reflection.”—“Not from resolve or propensity is Cæsar not cruel,” said the candid Curio; “but because he regards clemency as the means of gaining the people: had he lost the love of the people, he would be cruel.” Cæsar really was very easily appeased, as is proved by his inviting to dinner Catullus on the very day he gave him satisfaction and made some atonement, although the latter himself had admitted that he had branded Cæsar for ever, by some little poems still extant, which are very offensive but perhaps very true, or might have been so placable solely because he, in point of fact, neither esteemed nor loved any one. At all events, we must not suppose that no feeling of revenge lay at the bottom of his heart. His own account betrays how fain he would have taken vengeance on the inhabitants of Marseilles, who were zealous partisans of Pompey and had opposed him with extreme stubbornness. Cicero alludes to his peculiar hatred of them as a thing universally known. He pretends he spared these Massilians, a highly civilized people of Ionian descent, great lovers of freedom, only from respect to the fame and antiquity of this republic, like as Alexander caused to be held sacred, at the sacking of Thebes, the house of an old poet who had been dead nearly a century. We cannot entirely give credit to this assertion of Cæsar’s. He still felt, it is true, that reverential feeling for classical antiquity, for genuine civilization in arts and sciences, as many incidents prove; but he could not, if he wished to keep true to his great plan of prudent and politic clemency, act so unceremoniously with so important a city, that enjoyed such great privileges, and was so deeply compromised with the factions of the capital, as with an insignificant Thessalian town, which he destroyed without any scruples, simply because it had chosen what appeared to it the safest and securest. Let it not be deemed surprising, that I should lay so great a value on a feeling, which is now perverted from its right use and laid on as a paint to colour sloth, which finds it more convenient and easy to bewail voluptuously the wreck of the past than to struggle bravely onwards

with braced-up energy on the straight way. As among the moderns, the inward conviction of an imperishable boundless perfectibility, both of the individual man and the whole human race, is the last anchor of sinking virtue, so among the more modern of the ancients, when humanity was already irrecoverably lost, and continued to sink deeper and deeper still, the reverence for classic antiquity was at that time the sole foundation of real greatness, as now the reverence for science and enlightened knowledge.

He indeed despised in the zenith of his power all his rivals, one only excepted, far too deeply to be able to hate them right cordially. The stern speeches, nevertheless, with which he accompanied his acts of mercy, were intended not merely to inspire a wholesome terror, but they were at the same time a demonstration of his disposition by no means naturally mild. His own representations confirm this most amply. How hateful and despicable does he not make all his enemies, and that too not without triumphant arrogance, if we except Pompey, to whom he is remarkably indulgent. Against Cato especially, he gives himself up to such gibes and invectives, as almost to forget the dignity of history. Generally speaking, it must be, for those who extol as an inimitable historical performance that work in which Cato and Pompey's party are lampooned no less than Socrates and his disciples in the *Clouds* of Aristophanes,—it must be, I say, not yet clear to them what an historical performance is. It is true, Cæsar wrote his *Commentaries* in the same spirit with which he conquered. A mere material for history cannot be purer, and in this respect they may be considered as unique in their way ; this native energy of the most vivid description in such terse brevity and easy clearness has quite a peculiar charm. So extremely simple a style of expression would, as Cicero so appositely remarks, be only adulterated by the artificial adornment of an orator, capable of entirely deterring qualified persons from the further working out of that self-same material. To the title, however, of a perfect historical production, a work so impregnated with the spirit of party can lay no claim ; to that title belong above all both a material and a subject that possess universal and permanent value, as a part and essential portion of human history—conceived, explained, ordered, appreciated, and represented with that greatness and dignity such as a man

would work out a similar material—a man that should be of a pure great character both as a moralist and a citizen, at the same time a deep historical thinker, nor withal devoid of poetical feeling. The first condition for a history of the Pompeian civil war would be taking a higher morally historical ground to stand on, to compare and estimate the Optimates and Cæsarians with that sublime, just impartiality of a Thucydides, who passes sentence on Athenians and Spartans with equal truth and strictness; this should be done too on the principle of historical just even-handedness to all parties. Cæsar's Commentaries, on the contrary, are, as Asinius Pollio has already declared, not even thoroughly sincere, nor drawn up or composed with the requisite nicety and accuracy. The singular delicacy with which Pompey is treated in them is, however, very natural. Whoever supposes that the author honours in him the former friend and relative, the meritorious citizen, or the great man, he knows Cæsar not. Cæsar spared in him only the triumvir, as in Sylla even the dictator; for this reason he caused the statues of both, when pulled down by the mob, to be raised again. Thus acted in the spirit of rivalry and magnanimity towards each other, but which cost them nothing, the Macedonian princes, Ptolemy and Demetrius, the latter a man of a cruel and depraved character, but of mental culture and the most exquisite taste for art, while thousands of their adherents perished in war for the furtherance of their ambition! They were but rivals; the proper enemies of both were the nations they tyrannized over and oppressed.

The number of women with whom Cæsar had relations betrays great sensuality; assuredly it was his understanding alone that restrained his passions whenever this was the case, and not any moral sentiment. Nicomedes attaches to him even the grave imputation of indulging in intercourse with his own sex. His notorious intimacy with that Bithynian king was a subject for the dithyrambs of many an ambitious poet, and a common topic for all the orators of Pompey's party. Bibulus, who could not forget that people had called in jest their joint consulship only the consulship of Julius and Cæsar, called him for it "the Bithynian queen." "First he loved a king as he does now a kingdom." Cicero answered him in the senate when he was defending the cause of Nysa, the daughter of

Nicomedes, and had mentioned the benefits of the king to himself, "Do not speak of that, I pray thee; we know only too well what he gave to thee, and what thou gavest to him." Curio, the father, went so far as to reproach him with "being the husband of all the women and the wife of all the men." Even when master of the Roman world, when he was solemnly ascending the Capitol in all the refulgent pomp and pride of victory, with torches around him, and the torchbearers borne by forty elephants on the right and on the left, he was reminded most emphatically of that sorry business about Nicomedes by his own companions in arms. The soldiery in that moment of excess and license jested also in their free songs of triumph about his lavish expenditure of borrowed money, the bad dinner he gave them at Dyrrhachium, nay, upon his bald head. The remarkable fragments of these triumphant and satirical songs on Cæsar fully prove that the military jokes of the Roman veterans were as trenchant as their swords. A rude pleasantry, a bold love of banter, were original features and peculiarities of the Roman character in general; and nothing was more unroman than that surly stiffness which we are accustomed to introduce into the picture we sketch out for ourselves of the Roman character, consulting as we do a later period, when every free movement was suppressed, or assigning too much dignity of expression to the authors. The unlimited freedom of military jests at triumphs was a primitively old custom of the Romans, cited by Dionysius as a proof of their Grecian descent. There is, too, something Attic in it; but then at Athens this festive freedom was the right of every free citizen, whereas at Rome it was allowed to the soldier solely in his capacity as such.

There is something very important in this freedom, sanctioned by custom, of unrestrained joke and merry quirk and jibe; it is a very peculiarly characteristic trait, that reveals and portrays the free education and the classic sense of the ancients; and indeed we often get better acquainted with entire nations and æras, as we do with individuals, by means of their games than their seriousness, when they are acting for some particular effect and with some concomitant motive.

Among the many Roman women, of whom Cæsar had carnal knowledge, were a wife of Crassus and one of Pompey. It is remarkable, that the crafty and subtle man, while he literally

had the sole disposition of the money of the one and employed the power and rank of the other, dared to invade the house and nuptial bed of both. It would almost lead us to suppose that he made his love intrigues subservient to his ambitious and political views, as Augustus was subsequently accused of doing, that he might more securely rule the men or learn their secrets. His marriages at least had evidently a political object! As the marriage tie in the tranquil periods of the old republic was the firmest bond of social order, so in the period of the civil wars the Roman matrons, from the great facility of divorce, passed as an important connecting link between the two opposed parties, quickly from one hand to another, and altered the family, according to the change of political relations and views.

Cæsar, however, had not always such ambitious secondary views in his amorous pursuits; this is beyond doubt, for he gave himself up to them when the doing so was likely to frustrate his chief object. "He also loved queens," says Suetonius; "amongst others the African Eunoë, Bogud's wife, giving her husband enormous wealth; but above all Cleopatra, with whom he often revelled at the banquet the whole night long, whom he even sent for to Rome, on whom he showered honours and presents, and allowed her to name the son she had borne him after his own name." Here it is clear that passion controlled him, for he injures himself uncommonly with the proud Romans, who could not understand that a vanquished foreign queen could be destined for aught save to adorn more completely a triumphal procession in all-conquering Rome, and then to die, or to be reduced to some humble condition from motives of pity, like the young and beautiful Arsinoë, Cleopatra's sister, with whom Cæsar graced his Alexandrian triumph.

But how does this love for the queens, and which was so injurious to his cause in Rome, more especially his almost ruinous sojourn with Cleopatra, how does all this agree with that perfect intellectual command he otherwise possessed over his passions? Only during the period when his being was developed in its full strength was the inward agreement of all his powers so thoroughly preserved in the greatest unity of character. Afterwards we find frequent traces of decadence, and before quite as frequently the marks of immaturity.

several of which have been already alluded to. Not merely in the first period of his life, properly so called, which commences with the stubborn refusal on his part to put away his wife Cornelia, the daughter of Cinna, at the command of the bloodthirsty tyrant, and with Sylla's judgment, that more than one Marius lay hid in this young man ; but even in the second period, from his leaving Spain to his crossing the Rubicon. As all organic forces, when they are not hindered, gradually develop themselves from their germ up to maturity, and as soon as the highest point has been attained, re-approach their dissolution, so do we find this to be the case among ancient men, whether as individuals or collective humanity, since the civilization of those men was merely a pure production of nature deranged by no art. It astonishes us at first sight to perceive with what confidence the ancients assign and determine the periods, especially the flourishing period, of an artist and thinker, or of a hero ; but since the most decided certainty in the grades and modes of culture is an essential property of the free natural development, it really required merely a sound view, a sure look, to be aware of their presence. He who has fostered and rendered acute his innate sense for all that is classic by deep research, may easily enter into this way of judging, this view of life, even in those places, where the traces of the ancients leave him.

In Cæsar's life the periods are so conspicuous, that we cannot avoid perceiving them. Who does not know his remarkable hesitation at the Rubicon, and his quick decision ? A great epoch, not merely in his outward condition, but also in his inward character ! From this crossing of the Rubicon, whence he could at length march right on without further concealment to his great object, braced as he was to the highest pitch of daring, by the most threatening dangers and formidable obstacles, till the Pharsalian battle ; during this period all his powers were in their greatest activity and most perfect harmony. During all this time we shall not be able to discover in him the least trace of relaxation or want of precaution ; he even knew how to keep in due subjection his natural arrogance and pride. During this period the traits are multiplied one after the other of a dissimulation worthy of Themistocles himself, not like that unsuccessful imitation of the Athenian by Pompey, who endeavoured to excuse to him-

self his ill-judged flight, with the great example of that old classic master \* of political craft, whilst he, who in truth only wished to rule, fled merely because he hoped he might return like Sylla, and could not even keep to himself this vain and fond hope. Whether Cæsar displayed more military talent and skill at Alesia would be difficult to decide; but that he showed himself still more as a great man and character at Ilerda and Dyrrhachium is clear from his own relation. Now it was he conceived also his great plan of a dictatorship and military dominion, that should be altogether merciful and clement, in total contrast to the nature and custom of all the Roman civil wars. The happiest discoveries have so natural an air, that every one thinks after they have been made, he would have done so too. Let us, however, only reflect, that Cæsar overthrew all the existing republican forms without the slightest reservation; that he did not even make a show of putting new forms in their stead, by virtue of being lawful dictator in the old Roman but obsolete sense of the word; of purifying the state, of healing its wounds, of wishing to found a constitution; that he was neither more nor less compelled to rob and plunder on a grand scale, in order to defray the war-expenses; that he was environed with criminals and bankrupt spendthrifts, who dared demand everything, and incessantly urged him on to murder. He was compelled to intrust the republic and the provinces to men, not one of whom, as Cicero says, perhaps with some slight exaggeration, could have managed his own paternal estate for two months. To this must be added, that one single rash step would have infallibly drawn after it countless others. Thus Curio judged, and he had most assuredly closely observed the course of events, when he said, that the putting of the obstinate Metellus to death, which the victor was certainly strongly incited to do, would have inevitably occasioned great bloodshed. Moreover, the way was quite paved out, since proscriptions and executions had become so common an

\* The Roman aristocracy of that time were fond of comparing themselves with the classic statesmen of the civilized political bygone ages; for such they actually considered the most celebrated Grecian statesmen, and decided on their political character exactly as critics do in any art. Thus Cæsar, who knew so skilfully how to hit off the flattery most certain of winning Cicero, compared him in his Anticato with Theramenes and Pericles.



occurrence with the Roman parties in their embittered strife. Pompey himself made no secret of his intention to use victory after Sylla's fashion ; and even the Optimates expected nothing else, than what might naturally be expected from the apathetic severity of a warrior grown grey amid scenes of blood, and from the fury of internecine war,—that is to say, a universal massacre and pillage. The ingratitude, too, of Pompey's adherents, who were already pardoned, would necessarily excite the vengeance and passions of Cæsar. If we weigh all these circumstances, we cannot refuse our highest admiration to the force of self-control, to the lofty firmness, with which Cæsar carried out his great plan. He gave to the world, for the first time, the unexampled instance of a tyranny that appeared almost beneficial in the eyes of his republican opponents, since Cicero himself, after Cæsar's death, admits, against his will as it were, the corrupted age could hardly have ventured to refuse accepting such a master.

The moment when Cæsar reached the culminating point of his character, and now began to sink again, he has himself fixed with wonderful precision. In his Commentaries, otherwise so free from all idle considerations, which go directly and quickly to the point, and only give the condensed judgment as a fact, he pauses once, and once only, at that customary popular superstition, with which Grecian mythographers and rhetoricians, as well as Roman annalists, have so often surcharged their talented historical representations in the spirit of the priests and augurs. He is never wearied with giving in full detail the prodigies and portents connected with the victory at Pharsalia. It is as if he wished to say, “a violent shock passed through all nature, when Cæsar became master of the Roman world.” In reality, too, that did pass through himself what he transposed to nature. Immediately afterwards he says:—“Cæsar, confiding in the fame of his deeds, had not hesitated to proceed with a small force to Alexandria, and believed himself now to be safe in that place.” “In Alexandria,” he continues, “the Etesian winds compelled him to remain ; for these blow directly contrary to those who wish to sail from Alexandria.” We know what Egyptian charm these Etesian winds mean. It is also not unimportant, the fact, that he now thought proper to cease writing his history himself ; for as for leisure, he had quite

as little now as previously. His poor successor, in the enumeration of his deeds, tells us shortly after, "that Cleopatra remained under Cæsar's protection." At length he tears himself away from her; but his extravagant joy at the unwonted rapidity\* of a victory, by no means remarkable for him, over Pharnaces, is already a proof of that irremediable decadence which we need not here trace out any further.

The character of a classic statesman, and ancient hero must be judged by what it was in the period of its perfect development of force. Cæsar's most peculiar, and his distinguishing quality, is, according to this rule, the inward consequence of his whole being; the perfect agreement, namely, of a complete imperatorial energy, and a complete imperatorial understanding. What we have to understand by imperatorial energy is already defined so happily by the Roman name, that it hardly requires a long explanation; the energy, the power not merely to conquer men externally, but also to subdue and dominate their minds internally. That Cæsar quelled a mutinous legion with a word, that he could so overawe a Lucullus with mere threats, that the latter fell at his feet, belongs quite as much to it, as his often rallying alone an army, on the point of giving way, by rushing against the fugitives, seizing them individually by the throat, and turning them round to the enemy, although the panic terror was so great, that one eagle-bearer threatened to wound him, another left the standard in his hand.

Cæsar's understanding also was thoroughly imperatorial, and that too in the highest degree; it was precisely such as a perfect hero requires for acting and conquering, but without any superfluous additament whatever. His Commentaries surpass even (in this imperatorial view and power) the greatest historical master-pieces of the Greeks, as likewise by the Roman greatness stamped on every page of them; where also we see that urbanity, that intellectual kind of a joyous social feeling so peculiar to the Romans, and which was hereditary in Cæsar's family. This may also be remarked in his speeches, which he delivered with a clear voice and fiery action; in which, too, the spectators admired the great force, acuteness, and rapidity of the orator, but above all a certain admirable care in the language he can-

\* Veni, vidi, vici.

ployed, his perfect correctness of expression so well suited to the subject. Cæsar, indeed, as far as we can judge by his works, letters, or speeches extant, is never short in his style at the expense of clearness. Still he preferred here, as he did in everything else during his life and career of action, the shortest way, direct to the object, so that the speediest death also seemed to him to be the best. The whole character of his oratory is a confirmation of his endeavour to effect in everything that which acted in the quickest manner on the greatest number of people. That which gives such great virtue to his Commentaries is not a rhetorical talent resembling the verve and power of the poet. There is, even in them, not a thought of a beautifully connected and artificially grand arrangement of the whole, which by the bye is found in no Roman history, Sallust excepted. In this respect the Commentaries appear, even in comparison with Xenophon's *Anabasis*, quite uncouth and rude of art.

Cæsar had also the weakness to make verses. They were not more successful than those of the grave Brutus and the learned Cicero ; in short, they may be almost termed bad. We cannot read, without a smile, how carefully Cicero inquires of his brother for a more complete opinion of Cæsar's respecting a poetical attempt of his own, and then cites his provisional judgment on art, which, by its very limitation, and by its talented mode of expression, sounds even still more flattering, and has a comic touch of connoisseurship about it. Cæsar, in general, had no proper feeling for the really beautiful. His love for the works of the old painters and sculptors, for splendid and valuable things of every description in art, is not in contradiction with that, and resulted very naturally from many other characteristic qualities of his being. He felt, beyond all doubt, a love, a passion for that which was perfect of its kind, no matter what ; the same veneration, too, for classic antiquity, which at that time was universal among the higher classes. To this was added the Roman love of pure, simple splendour, and lastly that fondness, so often peculiar to great rulers and conquerors, for valuables of mere arbitrary worth. Thus he was fond of large pearls, the weight of which he sometimes ascertained by weighing or poisoning them in his hands.

Perfect also, with the same consistency and harmony as

his whole being, were the two essential ingredients or components of it,—his practical force and his great understanding. The rapidity and the intensive strength of his activity were not greater than their immense extent and sphere, their adamantine and indomitable perseverance. His judgment was unerring, his understanding firm, his mind inventive. By reason of this inward consistency and harmony of all his intellectual faculties and practical qualities bent on one object, it will not be easy to find in modern history a hero, who, with respect to them, can be placed on a par with Cæsar. The peculiar advantage of the moderns does not so much consist in the extraordinary greatness of individual mental and moral forces, as in the capability of giving them all a higher direction and application. Otherwise, you will find here very often carried to a great height, both in the individual instance, and the totality of modern civilization and history, rapidity and perseverance in life and action, strength of character and scope, comprehensive greatness of mind, as also for the most part memory and inventiveness, or mind with imaginativeness and judgment, only at the expense and to the detriment of one or the other of these qualities. To the characters of antiquity, on the contrary, that harmony of all the powers and of the whole life, directed to a given centre, and to a definite, even if not so intellectual an object, gives precisely the ancient greatness, and the firm secure style in life, which imparts to them the semblance of a higher perfection, that is, of a decided, and consequentially perfect natural force. Besides this, similar difficulties, and such an arena for the development of great political characters, and the display of heroic greatness, hardly ever occurred again to such an extent since the fall of the Roman republic. The force required for exalting and enlarging an hereditary monarchy, and that force required for monarchically governing a republic, the greatest indeed that ever was, by republican means, can bear no comparison. It can only serve us as a single trait to conceive the activity and rapidity of his mind, when we recall to mind that he could dictate, at one and the same time, two letters when on horseback, or even four, aye, and if his mind was wholly disengaged, seven even. It excites our utmost astonishment, when we take into consideration, that among them, there were letters of such important

contents, often too purchase of such exquisite finish, as the one to Cicero still extant, and which bears on it all the impress of Cæsar. He must, indeed, so as to accomplish his purpose, have seen through, and comprehended all the influential men of the whole vast Roman world, who might be serviceable or prejudicial to his interests; he must have kept a watchful eye over them, and guided them according to his views. Now, how he actually accomplished this, we can in some measure conceive, and learn to admire, from the relations he stood in to Cicero and Pompey, which we know still the most circumstantially.

In rapidity and fire he was equal to Alexander, in patient perseverance and in the extent of his exploits, he very far surpassed him; neither had a Philip broken the ground and paved the way for him. No Roman hero either before or after had to overcome such difficulties. The older Romans had an easier task, because they, though equally ambitious in their hearts, were yet republicans in form; and they, like Cæsar's successors, did but pursue a route already made smooth and practicable for them.

Were there a standard for sovereign greatness, Cæsar would for force and energy mark the very pinnacle of it. Would we contrast and compare with him merely in this respect the heroic characters of modern times and of the most recent period, who in a similar manner have wished to tread the same path of imperial supremacy and sovereignty, then would Cæsar especially carry off the palm for the consistency and happy perfection of his inward man, and for the great steadfastness of understanding resulting therefrom. We must here accurately comprehend and carefully keep distinct the ideas; for the perfect character is wholly different, not only in degree, but even in its nature from that one, which is merely extraordinary and great in the measure of its force. We remark in several great conquerors of more modern times, from Attila downwards, something mournful in their disposition, an inward discontent, which proceeds from a defect of harmony and concord with itself, and which occasionally gives birth to even a shade of sullenness. Cæsar, on the contrary, was content with himself; nay, of a decidedly joyous disposition, such as are all men that are perfect and in perfect keeping with themselves. The enjoyment of this inward per-

fection seems to be the highest vouchsafed to man, in so far as nature alone can do it. Compared with this, the precious enjoyment of the freshest and most verdant youth throughout the whole being, and in its rare purity, is but slight. Perfection, however, this choicest favour and gift of nature, is nothing else, save the fortunate co-operation, the complete union of several great forces, from out of which conjunction entirely new qualities and perfections proceed, which no measure, however intense and ample, of one single force can generate. The wonderful might, that lies in the inward and mutual community and harmony of all the moral and intellectual powers, is conspicuous in the history of the ancient states, that depended entirely on this said community. With respect to this fortunate perfection, Cæsar may be compared to Pericles, who stands in history great as a statesman, general, orator, and chief of a sinking republic, who like him stands on the boundary-line between a glorious past and a new state of things for the lesser sphere of Athens, such as Cæsar stood in the more extensive Roman world.

Nature, it would seem, has her favourites; and yet the balance in a certain measure is preserved or restored by the grand law, that perfection is to be almost always acquired only by manifold limitations. Thus, for instance, a total want of the finer and moral feelings of delicacy was an essential feature, I could almost say an element, in Cæsar's character and peculiar greatness. A Cæsar, that should have had withal some movements of noble-mindedness or of conscientiousness, in short such an ordinary half-virtue, would have been not only a most imperfect, but perhaps even, despite the greatness of individual, though disjointed powers, a very feeble, weak being. Weakness is often not an original defect, but the consequence of a false ratio between great powers, that mutually obstruct and neutralize one another.

For a perfect conqueror, Alexander, with all his passionateness, which it is true, when coupled with boundless power, can and really often does, have worse results, as the sober malignancy of a perfectly prudent understanding, was much too good and humane a hero. The easy inflammability of his passions themselves was of a very noble description, like that of Homer's Achilles. It betrays so deep a sensibility, announces such a lively sense, such a vital elasticity of strong

and noble inclinations, that Cæsar's nature when compared with his, appears only a rude Roman one, quite hard and bleak. Only we must excuse Alexander's expressing and revealing, with wonted despotic violence, feelings that reveal a deep source of genuine morality in his inward being, and we must not reckon as a merit Cæsar's more citizen-like forms in his, for the most part still republican world, since he, both in character, views, and sentiments, was more a tyrant than the former. That which Alexander did against guilty or incriminated Macedonians, we must at least judge by the principles of strict martial law, which always acts more promptly even among the mildest nations than the civil penal code. Alexander's apparent rashness, too, was often in conformity with the object to be attained, and on the whole founded on correct views, a consequence and a duty of his position. It was not required here to overcome systematically according to art, an intelligent foe by greater intelligence, but to overthrow a superior though blind force ; in which the fame of his incredible exploits achieved almost more than his feats themselves did. In no conqueror's character shall we find so many virtuous elements and beautiful traits. The unavoidable destruction of Thebes cost him an arduous inward struggle. With confidence he confided his life into the hands of Philip, a servant zealously devoted to him and tried, but deeply calumniated. He believed in fidelity, and was capable of the sublimest, most intimate friendship. He loved Hephæstion so fervently, that in the flower of his age, in the plenitude of power, and of renown leading to deification,—in short, in possession of all the goods that fortune can give or take, he remained inconsolable for his loss.

It might be said, perhaps, in compliance with usual prejudices, that to believe in virtue is folly in a conqueror, and that true friendship is a useless episode in his life. But precisely in this is it shown, that Alexander was more than ordinary conquerors. The sober Cæsar was, on the other hand, most certainly quite exempt from such glorious weaknesses. But this exemption from noble and moral feelings is shared with Cæsar by other great conquerors and world-rulers. A limitation quite different, that of his political mind, of the civilization which he himself had, and which he might have given as compensation to the lacerated world, as like-

wise in the mode and the means, how and through which he was enabled to promote and diffuse this civilization, is more exclusively peculiar to him.

After the Pharsalian victory, he believed that all was now accomplished, and yet properly the most difficult part of his task began then. For the power of the Pompeians, or rather of the old republican forms, had struck incredibly deep roots throughout the whole Roman world ; after all the shocks they had sustained, they were still very firm and strong. It may easily be conceived that the constitution of the Romans, who built even their roads and aqueducts as if for eternity, was not so loosely founded and not so easily overthrown. What was more natural than that the vast tottering edifice should fall upon the head of the heedless victor who had given it the last shock ? If his fall were necessary, if his project must needs be wrecked, the blame lay in an inward contradiction of the same, which at its completion could only arise from an original defect of his genius.

During the short period of his undisturbed autocracy, Cæsar commenced much that was great, and aimed at much still greater. He commenced that alone not, which Rome required above all things, and which alone could yield security to himself—a constitution raised on deep foundations and an organic arranging of the state, even if it had been more monarchical in its substance, nevertheless conciliatory and wisely mediating between the old forms of the republic and the new period and epoch of this single city, that had acquired the sovereignty of the world. Cicero very emphatically reminds him, in his beautiful oration for Marcellus, of this duty, with a dignity and free independence that would deserve our respect, had not the orator debased it by the hypocritical assurance of vows for Cæsar's safety, when he in fact was panting for the victor's death, perhaps even knew of the dawning conspiracy. That he joins the salutary truth with tact to the agreeable, that he praises Cæsar so brilliantly but yet truthfully, this cannot well be censured.

Had Cæsar been able to effect what Cicero, Rome, and humanity claimed from him, both loud and in silence, he would certainly have also desired it. He possessed, however, only that political energy and skill, and that talent which is requisite for being the head of a party. He did not possess a legis-



lative genius, a mind capable of forming organic institutions, as a Solon did, or other great founders and renovators of states. A surprising defect in Cæsar's mind is shown as soon as it passed beyond the limits of that party contest. Even then, when he stood on the summit of his power, and had just returned as conqueror to Rome, in six or seven days he rendered himself so odious to those masses whose cause he pretended to conduct, that Cicero derived great hopes from it. He experienced the most obstinate resistance, and he admits himself that he should have been obliged to leave the city without having effected his object. What too did the republicans, even when the war was quite over, not dare to do against him precisely by reason of his haughty assumption? It is not therefore to be looked upon as accidental, that everything political should be always touched upon so incidentally, so very superficially discussed in his almost exclusively military chronicles. At the head of his army, or as the chief of a party in the political contest and civil war, he had an invincible power, and was alone great. Not so, however, as the supreme guide of a mighty state in the calm period of peace, so as to insure to himself a lasting rule with order.

When a man has reached the object of all his aspirations, and the highest summit of fortune even to satiety has been gained, we are best enabled to learn thoroughly from this very object the real subjects and the extent of his inclinations. It then often happens, that he who has only dreamed of divinely exalted efforts, or boasted loudly of them, suddenly stands still; he has now no longer any wishes, because his immediate desires are satisfied. The limits of one's inclinations are a sure standard for his mental power; for what man can achieve thoroughly, that he desires also, and continues to do. Cæsar had reached the last goal of his wishes, and being content, had nothing left to live for, nevertheless without the slightest trace of melancholy, which would denote a still higher aspiration unsatisfied, and, from being deemed unattainable, unhopèd for.

It was also not chagrin and dejection arising from secret sources of despondency, it was not any distrust in the constancy of his own good fortune, but a pure satiety of life, without desire and without fear, not adverse to his being always gay and even unconstrainedly merry; it was the

simple feeling that he had reached the goal. "Unwillingly," says Cicero, "have I heard thy transcendently wise judgment, that thou hadst lived long enough for the contentment of nature, and also for glory. Enough, if thou wilt, perhaps for nature; I will also add, if thou thinkest so, for fame; but assuredly still far too little for the country, and that is the most important. Therefore cease, I pray thee, this view of thinking men respecting contempt of death; do not wish to be a sage at our expense. For I am often compelled to hear it reported of thee, that thou art constantly repeating that thou hast no further need of life. I would concede this, if thou only livedst for thyself, or wert only born for thyself. Now, however, that thy deeds concern the welfare of all the citizens, and have embraced the whole state, thou art as far from the completion of the greatest works, that thou hast not even finished yet the groundwork of thy plans." Thus spake the great Romans of that time to one another.

Since Cæsar desired nothing more, he had certainly accomplished all that he could, and for which he possessed the energy and talents, as well as the aspiration of mind. Or was it, perchance, no alluring goal of a lofty desire of fame, to save the sinking grandeur of the Roman people? Even the easiest solution to the difficult task of that age ripe for a new monarchical form of government; to introduce gently among the old civil forms a sense more in harmony and keeping with the present mode of ruling, to remove silently away the whole of the decayed parts from the former vital structure, to repair what was merely damaged, to prop it up and give it a new sheathing, a new coating, as it were, appeared so meritorious a work, that the wary dissembling character, who had the good fortune and the talent to complete it, has almost found an apotheosis in history itself. To be the new founder of the greatest state, the new modeller of the most illustrious people, to be this, the inward force and talent failed Cæsar. To conquer, in the fullest sense of the word, this he could do; he was able, not merely with the sword, but also by the power of speech and the influence of social connection, by superior force and subtlety, to bend and bow down the individual man and men in masses, to fascinate and bind them, to guide them according to his views.

Such was his peculiar talent, in which Cæsar, perhaps, has been surpassed by no other statesman or hero.

Modern sophists are much mistaken when they assign to Cæsar their own favourite error, and attempt, perhaps, to confirm it by his example, as if autocracy had only been the means for enabling him to gratify his boundless humanity, and promote the universal weal, after the full measure of his immense resources. No, conquering itself, in that more enlarged as well as in the common acceptation of the term, was his ultimate object. It was one of his favourite projects, to build a temple of Mars, and of a size such as had not previously existed, a trait that is important for this side of his character. It was triumph that he really desired and loved. Hence he could not abstain from triumphing even over Roman citizens, contrary to all political prudence, and that too in a manner that would needs alienate and exasperate all who still thought and felt as Romans.

His mental culture was limited in this way, that he liked perfection for its own sake alone in everything, whether great or small, hated everything that was bungling and imperfect ; he honoured what was classical, not because it was true, good, beautiful, and right, but because it was perfect in its kind. For genuine moral goodness and worth, for artistic beauty, or for inward divine truth and justice, he had as little taste, sense, and susceptibility as he had for poetic composition. His world and the subjects of his contemplation were the agreeable and the useful. It is true he carried out the useful to an immeasurable extent ; hence many of his projects appear sublime through the manner and intensity they were conceived or executed in, although their final purport is of that description, that, strictly defined, it can never be termed sublime.

The highest that he was capable of achieving for the furtherance and diffusion of this material culture, was to remove from his path difficulties, from which any other would have shrunk with dread, and to create in their stead vast materials. He was not capable of transmitting even a feeble portion of his great mind to one of his adherents, like Alexander, who left at his decease a seminary as it were of heroes, generals, and great rulers ; he was not able like a Solon or Themistocles to found political institutions or to animate anew those already

existing, to breathe into them the spirit of his own thought. In the major half of his nature he was a barbarian, for his genius was childless.

To exalt a rude or falsely civilized people to a really humane civilization, that lay not in his sphere. To compel and guide a warlike people that loved freedom to peace (what the Romans, with a peculiar expression, term *pacare*), in such a manner that it was literally crushed; that it from that time forth bowed patiently beneath the yoke of Rome's iron sway, that he understood better than any other. In accordance with his object, and in this spirit, he acted then in Gaul also in such a way that some in the senate proposed to deliver him up to the enemy. Gaul was for him, it is true, only a means and a preparation for other higher objects, a rich gold-mine, a military school for his legions.

Alexander, on the other hand, always embracing the two extremes, that which was opposed, protected his new subjects quite as much against the overbearing treatment of his warriors, as against the cruelty and covetousness of their own satraps. In the oriental traditions not yet extinct, he is still highly extolled for his humanity. If he is also called the "Robber God," what conqueror has ever been called differently by the suffering many? And are the latter then also capable of keeping distinct the unavoidable evils that have always accompanied even the justest war, especially in antiquity, from superfluous and wanton devastations committed for no object? Alexander's war against the Persians was as just as ever has been waged. It cannot be denied that his love of conquest increased with his success and progress; he then seized upon, in his way, whatever was in his grasp, else he had not been Alexander. He spared Grecian liberty so much, that he even delivered over some who had set themselves up as tyrants to their fellow-citizens.

It did not suffice him to overcome nations; the highest aim of his ambition was to be the founder of a universal state, the modeller of all nations, and to fill the whole human race with the Hellenic spirit. In general, the character of the Grecian instinct for conquest, which had already begun to work powerfully a considerable time before Alexander, aye, even before the schemes and plans of Philip, Jason, and Agesilaus, and before the retreat of the ten thousand under

Xenophon, was far more noble than the Roman instinct. The spring that impelled the Asiatic conquerors was thirst for fame and love of splendour ; the soul of the Carthaginian conquests was covetousness and pelf, or advantages in trade ; finally of the Scythians, that is, of all who lived and thought as nomads, we might say, that they went forth to conquest only through necessity and the want of adequate support for life, or through the absence of sufficient occupation. The Romans strove for boundless might, and honour, and rule ; hence the greatness of the Roman empire ; for every effort, surpassing the mere sensual present, to realize the idea of lasting posthumous renown, and the glory of one's native country, is sublime in the individual ; how much more so then the public enthusiasm of an entire people ? As every organic force, when its interior development is completed, and the material rudiments of life have been perfectly formed, feels an instinctive impulse to propagate itself, and form a congener out of itself ; so with the Greeks, from that moment when their collective civilization, the universal validity and high importance of which they themselves did not know or recognize scientifically, though they very definitely felt it, had reached its highest point of attainment ; from that moment, I repeat, was manifested the instinct of diffusing this spirit universally, of moulding all nations after the Greek ideal. From that moment there was universal peace and fraternity among all the Greeks ; everlasting war against all the neighbouring barbarians and tyrants was the favourite wish of the whole people, it was the common-place theme of all the sophists and political orators, because it was the prevalent idea of that period, and of the whole Hellenic race.

Alexander made the beginning, or at least had the grand design of raising the falsely civilized Asiatics to a truly humane culture. If now the Hellenic mind could never entirely pervade Asia, which continent, at a later period, rejected it again utterly, debased as that mind had become, as an element foreign to it from the beginning ; nevertheless, the more general diffusion of a real civilization, the foundation of which, Alexander, young as he was, knew how to lay so rapidly and enduringly, was not lost for the development of humanity, and it evidences in its founder a comprehensive-ness and a power of communicating genuine civilization, in

comparison with which the action of the Roman conqueror appears only rude and uncouth. We find this real culture, as likewise the mind and sense for it, in general, solely among Grecian rulers and conquerors, the first and worthiest of whom Alexander both was and continued to be.

He knew how to unite and identify in himself the royal leader of the Macedonians, the free chief of the system of the Grecian free states, and the Asiatic sovereign of the great Persian empire, in the most perfect manner. Whilst he formed an epoch in the art of war, while he gave to trade an entirely new direction, disseminated over Asia Grecian colonial cities, sent forth voyages of discovery, by which the limits of geographical science and natural history were immeasurably enlarged, he investigated, as a worthy pupil of Aristotle, in conjunction with philosophers, the nature of true civilization, the character of the strange Asiatic races, and the most appropriate mode of treating them. In grace of deportment and of mind a second Alcibiades, he adorned the path itself of his conquests to such an extent with the real Grecian beauty of art and life, with gymnastic games and musical festivities, that it resembled more a joyous procession of Bacchus than a desolating war. That also was especially peculiar to him, what we might aptly term the faculty for giving political vitality and creating organically. The power and the tact, not merely to attach men to himself, but also to unite them among themselves in a new political creation; to communicate and impart to the being thus united and new formed, a life of its own, independent of its creator, and in general to propagate his own creative spirit among his adherents,—this I repeat was peculiar to him. It is well known how skilfully he understood the art of transforming the customs and manners of the Asiatics and the Greeks, of mingling and blending them. His propensity to build cities was nearly carried to excess, and was not free from Greek vanity, for in the opinion of the Greeks it was finer and more sacred to be the author of a political being, the founder of a people (*κτίστης*), than to be victor in the public games. As a host of philosophers and orators proceeded from the schools of Socrates and Isocrates by their plastic master-minds, so was the camp of Alexander a seminary for kings. His successors and scholars were royal personages, both by their energy and mind,

boldness and subtlety, beauty and dignity of form. They seemed, says an ancient writer, to have been called, not from one distinct people, but from the whole human race. The least of them would have been still worthy of disputing as a general with Cæsar the prize of victory.

We only reproduce here two more features of Alexander's higher moral character. He is the only known conqueror of whom the report has been handed down to us, that he could sincerely repent the faults he had committed in anger. His bitter repentance for the murder of Clitus may remind us of the grief with which Timoleon did not, as a Greek sophist alleges, desecrate his great action, but rather testified the sacred purity of his motives. The hopeless despondency, into which Alexander sank towards the end of his life, which he gave utterance to in such varied and violent ways, is in this respect very remarkable, profoundly disclosing to us the innermost nature of his moral faculties and aspirations. There is in this sublime discontent, which only the death of a beloved friend gave rise to in Alexander, something wonderfully affecting, and on the other hand something also great, that captivates us ; a living instance and proof, as it were, that man has only the choice between contented mediocrity and restless exaltedness. What is greater than, amid the most wanton exuberance of everything that can possibly be desired, to long still unsatisfied after something higher and divine, that is unattainable ? That is more than Ilerda and Dyrrhachium ! There was also suffused throughout the entire life and being of Brutus, as ancient historians tell us, a melancholy of a kindred nature, by which the rigidity of his virtue is for our eye softened down to moral beauty. Such a feeling was wholly alien to Cæsar. His material weariness of life was a mere satiety in the superabundance of all earthly possessions ; and precisely at this terminating point of his career does it become most strikingly visible and evident, what a general deficiency there was of any aspiration towards an invisible higher something and a divine idea in all his grand acts and deeds. Who would not prefer being the unsatisfied Alexander, who remained imperfect, than the fortunate Cæsar, who reached the final goal of his desires, but who the while resembled Catiline, and was obliged to hate Cato ?

Cæsar himself openly admitted his resemblance to Catiline,

when he was reproached with having promoted some men of the very lowest extraction to the highest places of honour, inasmuch as he replied, that if assassins and robbers had been serviceable to him in the maintenance of his power and dignity, he would reward even such persons as these in the very same manner. It was universally believed that he had, on a certain occasion, despatched by poison, a hired suborner, because the project failed. In his first consulship he stole three thousand pounds of gold from the Capitol, and placed the same quantity of gilt ore in its place; he sold alliances and bartered away kingdoms. He often plundered temples and consecrated places; he destroyed innocent cities for the mere sake of booty. He only defrayed, by these and similar spoliations, the expenses of civil war, and the expenditure required for his triumphs, for his public spectacles and works.

Cato, who wished rather to be than to appear good, who in all things acted with strict morality, in accordance with old Roman virtue, because he, in conformity with his character, could not act otherwise, was quite equal to and a match for Cæsar in greatness of soul, though of an antithetical nature. Cæsar heartily hated him for it, since he could not despise him. The commencement of their open feud was that great day, when the thunders of Catonian eloquence dashed in pieces and crushed the half triumphant treacherous council of the crafty Cæsar concerning the Catiline conspirators, and filled the sinking senate with the old Roman enthusiasm. How paltry it was in the victor to display the image of this man in his triumph, who by a voluntary death, properly speaking, in the higher sense had triumphed over him, for the information of a witness in other things not over worthy of belief, is credible in this instance, that the death of Cato really vexed Cæsar, because it deprived him of an expected triumph, although he made no allusion whatever to it, until he at last broke out into the exclamation that cost him nothing of his mild views, which he declared he had entertained with respect to him. It is still more petty, that even when dictator, like a vacant quarrelsome speaker, he wrote invectives against him, which were so pitiful that even the republicans wished to publish them, in order by that means to exalt by so much the more



the fame of Cato, and to render ridiculous Cæsar's design of censuring Cato.

Alexander gave to the age he lived in a direction perfectly appropriate, nay, the very best possible one even for the Greek mental culture, and its diffusion over Asia. He had no share in the horrors committed by the despots who succeeded him, and no blame attaches to him ; they were totally opposed to his great nature. Cæsar did not profit by the fall of old free Rome to shape it into something better ; he only hurried it on and prepared it for still worse, for the very worst ; for other unworthy tyrants, succeeding him, enjoyed the fruits of his deeds. The whole amount of his Herculean labours was in the end only a further contribution to the fortunes of Augustus. Cæsar would have overcome legions of men, such as Sylla and Augustus were, in that ample sense of the word ; but in the more refined art of ruling, he was a mere tyro compared with Augustus, who knew how, with such masterly skill, to be the concealed monarch of a seeming republic. In the organic genius of a legislator, he was very far surpassed by even Sylla, who, it is true, was an absolute dictator, but still only such in a perfectly republican spirit and sense. For a republican imperator, Cæsar was too tyrannical ; for an absolute despotic monarch, too republican, too free and careless in his own manners and life.

This was not in a manner the consequence of an accidental false step, which would have drawn on the others unavoidably after it. It was not his crossing the Rubicon at the outset almost of his public life. It was, on the contrary, an original incapability and defect in his being to enable him to perform the mighty task of that period with the requisite consummation. He was naturally disposed to be tyrannical, and full of monarchical pride ; but without the inward worth appropriate to such a form, without the moral restraint and strictness over himself. At a very early age, in the funeral oration he delivered over his father's sister Julia, he boasted of his supposed royal race and eulogized the exaltedness of such a descent. Such expressions were very unwise and unseemly for the citizen of a free state, for a party chief in the Roman world of that time, and could only lead to such a catastrophe. This, however, is easily forgotten, so long as the god of the day

still stands on the pinnacle of fortune ; the transition is irresistibly rapid and easy from a demagoguical victor to a tyrannical despot. Cæsar was not perfectly clear also with himself about his ambitious sentiments, and constantly had in his mouth the saying of Eteocles in Euripides : " For the sake of sovereignty one may act wrong, in other things not." As victor, he shrank so little from the name of absolute ruler and tyrant, that he rather seemed to desire it. " Sylla," he said, " did not understand the rudiments of the governing art, by his having laid down the dictatorship. The republic was nothing but an empty name ; men might speak more reserved with him, and honour his words as laws." Towards the end of his life, he was wont to start in his sleep. He was doomed inevitably to fall, great as he was, and he had a prescient feeling of it. He was indeed great, as he fell, since he found Brutus one of his worthy opponents and avengers.

Cæsar paved the way for far worse tyrants than himself, —for a Tiberius, Caligula, Nero ; he was in his fall an instructive warning, example, and type for them, but in vain. If the republic at that time could no longer exist, the new monarchical constitution should nevertheless have been founded altogether more solidly, morally, and justly. There are times equally capable of a twofold direction, where the fate of mankind hangs as it were by a thread, by a hair. If now the age of Cæsar and Augustus had been such ? If it could be shown to be probable that the history of mankind would now be clear of some atrocious centuries, if Cæsar had either not conquered or had used this victory more wisely and greatly ? The sophists will hear nothing of this, they who think they know so accurately why everything bad that has ever come to pass was necessary and forced to come to pass. Notwithstanding this, these are useful, instructive questions and problems for a more exalted historical standard of morals and judgment.

Weighed together in this balance, the preponderance inclines to the side of the youthfully inspired Alexander, whose historical causality and action were more fruitful for the future than destructive for the present. If nation too be compared with nation, the dissolution of Hellenic freedom and civilization presents a less austere and joyless spectacle than the moral fall

of the old strict Roman world. We are in the one case still exalted in our minds by the last glorious soaring flight of beautiful Grecian enthusiasm ; whereas here, in the Roman western land, everything sinks down into monotonous lethargy, until the new sun of a sublimer and divine faith rises above the old ruins of dilapidated and fallen paganism.

ON THE  
BEGINNING OF OUR HISTORY,  
AND  
THE LAST REVOLUTION OF THE EARTH;

AS THE PROBABLE EFFECT OF A COMET.

(*A Critique on Rhode's Work,\* published at Breslau, 1819.*)

AT all times, amongst all nations and classes, the origin of history and of man has always been, as it still is, before every other, that branch of study which most interests us and evokes our faculty of research. The knowledge of antiquity, which partly and in its ultimate object is similarly directed to the gratification of this natural and ineradicable inquisitiveness, occupies a very important place in our present German literature, it is promoted zealously from the most different sides, it is cultivated with corresponding success. While new treasures and sources are being continually opened for us in Indian, Persian, Egyptian documents and monuments, or important elucidations of them given to us; while even Grecian antiquity, with all that is intimately allied to it, is drawn forth from the narrow circle of ordinary philology by the deep acumen of Creuzer, leading us back to the sources of all heathen theology, we are no less conducted by a geography, that really embraces both earth and men, in Ritter's genial mode of treating it, as well as by other discoveries, whether geognostic or relating to the natural history of the earth, or by a new arrangement and utilization of what was previously known, to that point where history may undoubtedly become a science, no longer having merely a middle, but a beginning and end also. This is, however,

\* J. G. Rhode Ueber den Anfang unserer Geschichte und die letzte Revolution der Erde, als wahrscheinliche Wirkung eines Kometen.

said, supposing that 'that' can be termed a science, which in point of fact is only the common remembrance of collective humanity, as soon as everything spurious shall have been separated, and a clear interpretation added to that remembrance of the primeval period, to our own development from the beginning. From all sides this copious supply of new sources and new ideas streams in upon us, enabling us to understand antiquity completely and more correctly, so that all, which now seems still to be wanting, is a sure key for the unlocking of all these treasures, by which we may be enabled accurately to solve the riddle of the past in all its plenitude of manifold shapes. Where already such a number of lineaments, so many single words of the whole, if we may be allowed such an expression, become suddenly tinged with light, solve themselves as it were, and irradiate too much that was previously dark; there we may well hope that all can equally become clear and intelligible, so soon as the light shall radiate forth to illumine and arrange. "On the grade, which our knowledge of collective antiquity has now attained," says our author in the preface (p. 2), "every investigator will look out for a firm spot to stand on, whence he may scan the wide field of his inquiry, so as to arrange with method and system the objects as they become visible to him." I perfectly agree with him, when he adds, "According to my view, that spot for standing on, can, and should only rest on an historical foundation, which must especially be solidly established, if that be in any way possible."

The author now arranges in a twofold manner those writers who have meritoriously advanced the higher knowledge of antiquity; inasmuch as he on the one part presents to us an extremely remarkable, a very simple, and yet so explanatory an hypothesis, based on geography, concerning the last revolution of the earth and the great flood, from which also, in the author's opinion, not indeed the first history of man proceeds, but yet that history immediately affecting us, the well-known (second) commencement of history; on the other hand, however, points out in the Zendavesta the evident traces of a most remarkable concordance with this very hypothesis of his, and generally speaking is convinced that he has found in the doctrine of Zoroaster, in the sacred traditions and writings of the old Parsees, the richest and most genuine source of olden history and religion or doctrine of revelation.

As far as regards the mode in which the author treats his subject, I cannot enough praise it. Clear and lucid as his style is, so is also the current of his thoughts, simple, directed straight onward to the essential. Bold and decisive in the acceptance of a great fact, or of a new supposition, as soon as he believes himself authorized to it and finds it adequately grounded, he, nevertheless, never in any way loses himself in too systematical a working out of all the details by petty over-nice grovelling, or by rash poetical starts. In the solving of some very intricate particular mythological question, many antiquarian investigators, like those mentioned above, may, no doubt, surpass him in critical acumen and learning. His really historical sense transcends in this, that in the course of his investigation he does not disturb what is unessential, what is isolated, that he keeps much open and free for ulterior and more close determination, that he confines himself to the principal thing, and only cares to establish the grand historical main facts of primeval history, and the results so simple, but of such after-importance, that spring from them.

I perfectly agree with the author also respecting the principle in the method of his inquiries; for I hold it to be, as he does, very possible to separate what is historical from the mythical part of the old traditions, and to extract the most essential facts of universal primeval history from the web-like envelope of mythology; so soon as light shall have once pierced this chaos, that is, so soon as the firm point of commencement, or the central point itself, shall have been found, for such investigations, and for the opening of man's history.

What I, however—this principle having been once accepted—can less concede or explain, is why the author in his first result (p. 6), should say, "That the history of man begins with the last great revolution of the earth;" for if, as he adds, the reminiscence of a former period remained to them notwithstanding, an element has been taken up into his assertion that perfectly neutralizes the whole. If the reminiscence of a former epoch remained, and was preserved in the only conceivable mode, by sacred tradition, by historical or poetical myth, why should not the historical be as well capable of being separated from this tradition and myth of the antediluvian period, as the author attempts to do from the subsequent myth since the last revolution of the earth? The

traditions of the first age after this revolution are also individually often dark, intricate, clouded enough. This was but natural, before the heaving elements of the preserved human race and the newly-arisen nations could have subsided anew and settled into order. It is not difficult to conceive that the saga of the primeval period, in relation to that first portion of time after the revolution during the first origin of the separated nations, would be preserved even purer and historically clearer. Now if the author finds in the Zendavesta the detailed circumstances and causes of the last great deluge given with admirable correctness (according to his by no means improbable hypothesis of it), why then perhaps other old traditions, the Indian for instance, furnish us also with very remarkable ruins and remains, traces, or hints of that very same antediluvian period. I expressly abstain as yet from mentioning here the Mosaic sacred document or primeval history, for this the author attempts to keep aloof from the train of his ideas and for the moment to set aside, fearing lest the application of it should interfere with and disturb the freedom of inquiry and a comprehensive criticism. For which reason we may well excuse him, if the historical contents of the Genesis be understood, or rather misunderstood, in the usual circumscribed manner, and be then polemically brought forward against all other old traditions. In a primitively historical inquiry, thoroughly carried out and really comprehensive in every respect, the matter would assume quite another aspect. As in a later and, compared to the other, lower region of antiquarian science, the old Herodotus, once so often reproached with being so fabulous, is now fully and universally appreciated by the most learned geographers and historians, is justified and lauded by them for his simple and candid wisdom; so likewise the more our Egyptian, Indian, Persian, and Chinese studies of the primitive age progress, the clearer our geognostical and primevally historical views become, may Moses and the Genesis, together with much new light, reattain also their ancient dignity in the most ample degree. The author does not like this string to be touched, although he actually is not opposed to the Holy Writ; yet it is singular and striking, that he should not have remarked himself, how his declaration (p. 31)—“That the probable commencement of human history occurs in the intervals between the two last re-

formations of the earth"—properly understood, so accurately agrees with the Mosaic account. A supposition, which is certainly not regarded by us as such, as a mere probability, but as an historical certainty, as much as anything can be called certain in the primitive history of man.

The last grand revolution of the earth remains the main theme of the author. That by this, in the *Zendavesta* also, the flood of Noah or the deluge is meant, and there assigned to the operation of the enemy of nature in the shape of a dragon-star or comet, that this is the same, which Moses likewise describes to us, is clear and indubitable from the circumstance, that the *Zend* myth connects the emigration of *Jemjid* pretty nearly with that frightful catastrophe, and this primeval king *Jemjid* is recognized to be a personage identical with the *Shem* of the *Genesis*.

The principal thought of the author concerning the last revolution of the earth or the deluge is this:—A great internal alteration was going on at that time in the earth, inasmuch as it very considerably deranged the axis and equator of its daily revolution, by which means also the geographical and climatical nature of the firm land was entirely changed. This great catastrophe in nature was occasioned by a comet that approached very near the earth, having risen in the southern sky, as is evident from the description of it in the *Zendavesta*. As far as regards the alteration of the pole, as asserted, the author relies also for its confirmation on astronomical remarks and suppositions with respect to the anomalies resulting from the measurements of degrees of latitude, such as they have been made up to the present time.

Now, since in this science of antiquity and primitive history, as in every other, the truth reposes on the evidence of "two witnesses," consequently here writ and nature, it is but reasonable, that besides the writ, as the sum of all the sacred old traditions, the other witness also, nature, that is, the spirit of geography and astronomy, as far as it has yet flourished, should be heard, so as to throw light into the darkness of the primeval world, while we are exploring there. An hypothesis of geography which, drawn up with this overpowering clearness, should unite and present so much that is acceptable from its lucid conviction and probable from its almost satisfying our doubts, has appeared not unimportant to us. I mean parti-



cularly by that only the principal fact as to the alteration of the earth's axis and equator, and to the entire climatic change of the habitable earth, that is quite naturally, not to say necessarily, connected with it. Whether a comet were the cause, as has been often thought, probable as it appears, that is for us a secondary matter. I will not meddle with that part of the subject. The real fact which throws light upon primitive history is that alteration of the equator, and in the climate of most countries. Supposing it also to be positively ascertained that a comet was the cause, we should nevertheless not lay too high and exclusive a value on the circumstance that it stands in the Zendavesta, although the mentioning of it, allowing that it really so was, must certainly be regarded as remarkable. This would be precisely as if we should allow Pythagoras to be the sole object of our admiration among the Greek philosophers, because he knew the true system of the world and the revolution of the earth about the sun, and not place a higher value on the sagacity of Heraclitus, the sublimity of Plato, the all-comprehensive penetration of Aristotle. Such a partial and too absolute an estimation of one primitive historical source, to the depreciation of all the others, ought by so much the less to be resorted to by the author, as he most justly censures a similar proceeding on the part of those who mistakenly apply the high authority of the Genesis for limiting investigation and confining the judgment.

To this must be added, that the correct astronomical interpretation of the old Asiatic documents is indisputably subject to great difficulties and uncertainty. The Tashter, for instance, which the author so decidedly considers to be the planet Jupiter, is, according to a communication made to me by a friend deeply versed in the Persian dictionaries and documents, in the Bundehesh, far more likely a fixed star; whilst others (see Creuzer, *Symbol.* i. p. 751, note 101, new edit.) take it to be the planet Mars. It cannot be doubted that a comet is meant in that passage of the Zendavesta, which speaks of the enemy of nature, a dragon-star, as occasioning the flood. Now whether the Zendavesta be right, whether a comet was really the cause or not, we leave this for the author to settle with the astronomers; as also the mathematically correct determination, whether the old South Pole is to be placed exactly in the fortieth or fiftieth

degree of southern latitude beneath the Cape of Good Hope. The course of the former equator, and consequently also of the tropical climate right through Asia in a south-westerly direction, and through the middle of Europe, has, nevertheless, historically, a great deal in its favour for explaining monuments actually there, and the remains of the primeval world. By this, for instance, are satisfactorily explained at once, and without difficulty, all the beds of elephant teeth in Siberia, the palms and cactuses in the strata of northern countries, and so on. In so violent and great an alteration, there can be no doubt whatever but that much which was once firm land has become sea, and *vice versâ*. Thus it becomes quite intelligible why fossil human bones are found so rarely and exceptionally, as on the island of Guadaloupe (p. 2), or in the Sierra Nevada of southern Spain (p. 35), although the earth was inhabited by a numerous race of men before the flood, since we can well assume that those human bones may lie in very many ways covered by the depths of the sea. It is therefore not exactly necessary to assume, according to De Lüc's arbitrary and violent conclusion (which some of our readers no doubt remember in the work of Stolberg), that all the previous land became sea in consequence of the deluge, but that the old bottom of the sea rose up, forming the actual habitable land; an hypothesis which has the fault of being too much of a good thing. We may, nevertheless, safely assume, that a very important change in the main land took place during the catastrophe, so much so that it would be idle labour were we to attempt to define geographically on the present earth the position of the real primeval land, such as it was before the flood. Hence also the four rivers of paradise in Moses, or wherever they are alluded to besides in Asiatic traditions, as Stolberg, in the text quoted (part i. p. 380), rightly observes, must now be solely regarded by analogy as a type; since in no part of the earth is a spot to be found, where four such streams, as there expressly mentioned, spring from one common source. This is the case, whether you consider the Phison, the only doubtful one, as St. Hieronymus did (Epist. II. 15), to be the Ganges, or look upon it as the Caucasian river.\* To this must be

\* I see on the Mosaic map of the world in Malte Brun's Atlas, that this celebrated geographer is inclined to regard not merely the Phison,

added, that in that passage of the Genesis the deeper symbolical meaning of the four rivers\* is of more immediate importance, since their geographical names are evidently merely added for the depicting of the analogy; so many examples of which are similarly to be found in other passages of Scripture.† In the same manner as the author considers the great flood and the change in the earth's axis that then took place, is also explained, in some measure, although not quite sufficiently, the highly irregular and utterly rent shape of our present four or five parts of the earth, unless it would be more correct, from deeper reasons of geography, to assume only three. According to the opinion of those, for instance, who find the character of an isolated part of the world most expressed in America, not alone in the peculiar impress of all its vegetable and animal productions, but also in the conformation of its shape, approaching at least more a certain norm, where the great north and southern halves are joined by a narrow isthmus. Here then it is assumed, that Europe and Africa, originally belonging to each other, were connected by an isthmus, now burst asunder, in the straits of Gibraltar; and so likewise Australia with Asia by the chain of islands still existing. But in as much as the northern halves of these two parts of the world, Europe and Asia of the one,

but even the Gihon, as the Cux and the Araxes, and to place them in Armenia. According to this explanation, the four streams would certainly rise in one region, or nearly so. But how still remote this is from *one* source dividing itself into four rivers! The difficulty, therefore, on this side is only apparently removed. The same geographer places the land Hevilath in Southern Arabia. But as Moses expressly says, that the Phison flows around the land of Hevilath, the difficulty now becomes magnified even, and completely insuperable. Hence I perfectly agree with Stolberg, that no geographical solution or explanation is here possible.

\* Compare with this, what the Apostle says (Ephes. iii. 18):—"Ut possitis comprehendere cum omnibus sanctis, quæ sit latitudo et longitudo, et sublimitas et profundum." Those four dimensions of the true life, "which the saints recognize," were no doubt known to man also in his originally pure condition; they may best conduce to point out to us the real meaning of the four regions of the world and the rivers of life in paradise.

† Thus in Jesus Sirach (xxiv. 32—37), the divine gifts, which proceed from the Mosaic law and Book of the Covenant, are compared to full streams of wisdom; and among these streams, three of those in paradise are named, the Phison, the Tigris, and the Euphrates.

Asia and Australia of the other, inclined together, the irregularity in consequence, as far as regards the shape of these parts of the world, thus grown together or entwined into each other, was even doubled. There is much that is very striking in this great irregularity, which might perhaps be connected with the earth's axis, as assumed by the author, but which, however, seems by no means immediately to result from it. We only remark, for instance, on the globe of the earth, how the main land extends both in Northern Asia and in America, with its whole breadth towards the north and the North Pole, while the great points to all parts of the world taper off in a direct line towards the south. In this hemisphere, moreover, the sea so preponderates, that we might also aptly term the South Pole the Water Pole of the earth. Independently then of the influence of a comet rising from this quarter, we could easily believe that the great flood broke in directly from the south, as is related in the Zendavesta. Is it not generally conceivable, quite apart from the alteration of the axis of the earth on the whole, that the main land also, and individual portions of the world, as pieces or limbs of the upper earth's coating, have been moved by themselves or thrust from their places? The irregular shape of the present main land might easily lead to such assumptions. Exclusive of the direction just alluded to of the breadth in the main land towards the north, and of the points stretching to the south, the outlines of the parts of the world separated by the sea, often appear to correspond mutually to each other in their indentures and prominences, as if they had been wrenched asunder, like as the rocky banks of a river often are, standing opposite each other. This is especially remarkable in South America; namely, on its eastern coast, and on the west coast of Africa, where both respond to each other. Much of the present irregular shape of the main land could thus be explained, on that supposition of a tide advancing from the south, and a subsequent divulsion from east to west, which, consequently, together with that direction towards the north, formed a twofold motion. If also upon the whole an external shock, as the effect of a proximate comet, was the effective cause of the flood, we need not exclude an internal alteration, metamorphosis, development, and evolution, or perhaps even disease in the organic life of the earth, from that,

which, if it did not produce the catastrophe, may have yet co-operated. Not to increase the number of possible conjectures in this higher department of geography have I permitted myself to make these allusions, but solely in order to attend to all the sides of the subject, and to pose them as questions to science. The most essential question of this kind may possibly be this, whether the shape of the main land, irregular as it actually is, may not have first ensued through the last revolution of the earth; whether the old continent, the real primitive land before the flood, may not have had a more regular and a more mathematically simple form; and if so, what? This question is of course superfluous, should the higher branch of astronomy already offer for answering it some analogies, derived from what it can know, or can with probability suppose of planetary formation. The author considers as an especially important sign for estimating the consequences of the last revolution, that only since then, upon the evidence of the Zendavesta, winter and summer should have existed, and that before the flood one season only, one perpetual summer, prevailed. Accordingly, he seems to assume, that the obliquity of the ecliptic also was then first produced; since change of seasons would essentially accompany such obliquity, no matter when or how produced.

Willingly as I assent to the main supposition of the author's respecting the last revolution of the earth, one thing still appears to be wanting. It would have been desirable, for instance, if the author had contemplated the climatical change of the earth not merely astronomically, and had not confined himself merely to the natural, historical phenomena on the surface of terrestrial life, but had extended the investigation also to the inner change effected in some manner during and by the flood, to the probable deterioration of the atmosphere in its elementary nature, as also to the consequences of this change for man himself, his diet, and the diseases to which he is subject; perhaps even to the existence thereby given to some subordinate animal productions; since in the decaying organism of a deceased individual every kind of false life and of vital organization is produced. In these and such respects we should have been glad, if the author had also introduced into the sphere of his considerations the atmosphere, the change and deterioration it under-

went during the last revolution of the earth. The air is, after all, that which is real in nature; the atmosphere forms the proper organ of all earthly life.

Thus far respecting that which belongs to geography, in the idea of the author, the definitive decision of which, for the most part, belongs to another tribunal. I now turn to the properly historical part of the work, lying before me, which more directly concerns us. Here I shall follow the author step by step; but at the same time connect with it and prelusively introduce some few words concerning the Genesis. Not for the purpose of disputing with the author, because he has hitherto paid such little attention to Moses, and does not seem to have made himself intelligible,—for in point of fact, his judgment respecting him, only negatively expressed, can hardly be deemed one at all,—but solely to throw light on the case itself by so doing; since this, namely the beginning of human history, is now inseparably connected with the profounder and right understanding of that sacred document; since also, among the results of the author, those which concern the nature and essence of the first and primitive religion, appear to be the most important, which we have to consider with especial attention, to which then, what remains to be reminded concerning the primitive language, the origin of alphabetical writing, and the migration of the first human races from one common primitive land, we can easily annex as a corollary.

In a work of a kindred nature ("On the Age and Value of some Asiatic Documents," preface, page vi.) the author quotes a passage from Sir William Jones concerning the application of the Genesis to learned and historical investigations, which is of the following import: "Either the eleven first chapters of the Genesis are true, or our national religion (the Christian one) is false. But now Christianity is not false, and consequently those chapters are true." Now this is exactly the principle, which the author blames, considering it as destructive to the freedom of research; he finds it most objectionable, and he utterly reprobates it in all those, who, even in this department of science, must needs preserve their character of mere Christian scholars and act accordingly.

In the work before us also (p. 22) he reckons among those prejudices, which must first be discarded, before the investi-

gation can at all proceed with impartiality, the assertion, "that there are and can be no older documents than those of Moses, and that all ancient traditions, for this very reason, are manifestly false." First of all, as far as regards the age of the other traditions and documents, criticism alone, and not religion, has to decide; nor is it at all evident how it can in any way affect religion, even should older traditions than the Mosaic be really discovered. It may be notwithstanding assumed as positive that this case has not as yet occurred. The actual rejection of all traditions that do not happen to coincide with the Mosaic is not by any means so unconditionally contained in that principle, as Sir W. Jones has expressed it. Categorical and peremptory for learned criticism, of grave results for historical research, as it may appear at first sight, it may be easily cleared up and explained. It is not the principle itself so immediately concerned as what follows after. If the conclusion is drawn from that phrase, that all other Asiatic documents and traditions, which perhaps only apparently contradict those of Moses, are to be at once valued as nought and utterly rejected, why then assuredly all further investigation and enlargement of our views would be cut off and annihilated. But this is by no means the case, if we would content ourselves with simply deducing from that argument, perfectly correct in itself, what really is contained in it; that we have, namely, carefully to examine and critically to inspect all other Asiatic documents and traditions, more especially to compare them with one another and with the Mosaic account. It is clear that Moses, even if we did not reverence his account as a sacred one, would necessarily appear as the first of safe guides by reason of his sublime simplicity. To attempt at least such a comparison, and until its completion to suspend and preserve unbiassed the judgment, regarding all that reveals itself as quite uncertain or too difficult for the comprehension, this is a law imposed on us by sound criticism. Sir W. Jones, notwithstanding that maxim of his, himself attempted on a great scale, with equal great comprehensiveness of judgment as deep learning, to institute such a comparison of the Genesis with the other old traditions and all the new ethnographical discoveries, in his treatise on the descent of all known people according to their three

principal races. It would do no harm if we, in accordance with that critical moderation, would assume also in a manner as possible, that we do not perhaps as yet understand, or at all events have not hitherto understood, in their full extent, the physical and historical contents of the Genesis; a supposition not in the slightest degree opposed by Christianity, as the moral instruction, which we have to derive from that commencement of the Bible, is in religion not doubtful and in the main quite independent of learned investigations. If anything, however, can serve as confirmation to the assertion, that the Genesis is no longer at all rightly understood by our criticism as hitherto applied, and by our present exegesis, it is the universal applause which the well-known hypothesis has found among so many biblical scholars, that the beginning of Moses has been blended, has grown or been interwoven from two documents—an Elohim-document and a Jehovah-document;—an hypothesis that immediately falls to the ground as soon as we have begun to understand the sense of the holy record; but I reserve it, since it is still so generally diffused, as a remarkable monument of critical error in our century, for the sake of elucidating it thoroughly on some other occasion.

Let us now compare first the view of the author concerning traditions in general, and let us see how his own ideas are at all applicable to the Genesis or stand in relation to them. The author remarks very correctly and ingeniously, that we can distinguish two different lines and threads (pp. 1 and 2) in the myth and tradition of any ancient nation; the mythic, which is directed to the commencement of all history and at all times, is interwoven with some theology or cosmogony; the other actual and appertaining to the history of each nation as its own. In history itself, however, we have again carefully to distinguish the ante-chronological part from what is already chronological. It must be confessed that it certainly is that first thread with its contents, directed to the beginning of human history with reference to God or to nature, that is especially susceptible of the mythic formation and also presents the nucleus for mythic increment; but as this is not absolutely necessary, and in the Genesis decidedly is not the case, it would be more correct to name quite simply this part of tradition the primitively-historical, according to



the essential contents of the recognition preserved in it. In the Genesis the ten first chapters form this primitively-historical part, and this part peculiarly, which alone concerns us here, we shall subsequently understand by the name of Genesis. It is to be observed, that the other constituent part, which we should prefer calling the popular-historical, need not be absolutely actual, but may also contain very much that is symbolical and typical, as indeed is the case with the popular-historical part of the Genesis, the forty last chapters in the first book of Moses, which do not here more immediately concern us. It is really surprising how it was the author did not remark how singularly applicable this perfectly correct division and idea of his is to the document of Moses, since hardly an old Asiatic tradition besides this can be found, in which the primitively-historical contents are kept so palpably and distinctly separated from the popular-historical, at the same time, however, both so naturally linked together according to the historical thread of the relation. This historical connection or linking is most conspicuous in Nimrod, at the close and in the last chapter of the primitively-historical part, and in the destruction of Babel in the eleventh chapter, which preludes the birth and call of Abraham as the beginning of the popular-historical part. Quite as palpably also in the primitively-historical part is the ante-chronological separated from the chronological. The chronological begins with Seth in the fifth chapter, but the four first chapters, are ante-chronological; for, although what is related about the discovery of human arts and civic regulations in the race of Cain descends indubitably and certainly into chronological history, still it is described, and this should be carefully attended to, without chronology, forming in this manner the transition and connecting point for the chronological part and period.

Now, what principally distinguishes the Genesis in its most peculiar and limited sense, that is, those first ten chapters of a primitively-historical purport, is the hieroglyphical brevity prevailing in this section, that so forcibly contrasts with the circumstantiality and copiousness of detail in the following popular-historical part. If, also, in this latter there is contained much that is of deeper import, still it is not comprised so in single allusions, as so much is found set aside

in the first part, as if lost to all appearance. In point of fact, hardly another piece can be found in the whole circle of human language, writ, and tradition, where all is so replete with grave import and the deepest meaning, where every word and every syllable is so significant, as in this mysterious beginning of the Genesis. We cannot avoid seeing, that this hieroglyphical brevity was intentional, and in part it is not difficult to find out what this intention was immediately directed to, or by what it was determined. Moses wished by it to confine himself to what is absolutely indispensable and most requisite in primitive history, in order to prevent all mythic increment, to which this subject-matter is so congenial, since this increment could only render that profundity of revelation liable to abuse, and was especially too wholly incompatible with the vocation and the peculiar way in which he intended, and indeed was bound, to lead his people. There is another analogy, however, for explaining the intention of that hieroglyphical brevity of the Genesis, existing in the Bible itself. The corner-stone and the end of it are no less dark and mysterious than the beginning. As now the clear light which the prophet of the new covenant launches forth into the darkness of the future and the final age of this world, may indeed become manifest and intelligible to the solitary individual to whom it is useful or necessary, but for the whole, because the too clear knowledge of the future would otherwise act disturbingly, nay, on the least abuse, with frightful destruction on the present, must and will remain sealed up in that book of the Apocalypse, until the time shall have come when it is to be unsealed ; so likewise a complete knowledge of collective primitive history in the first ages of the world would have worked only disturbingly and destructively to excess on the people of Israel, which, abiding in the promise under the law, had to walk without diverging on the way pointed out to them towards the assigned goal. For this reason, therefore, was that knowledge thus kept back from them, thus shrouded in light, and only imparted in that exact measure, such as was essential to them. If, above all, we conceive the Bible as a whole, the Gospel forms as it were the middle of it, from which the light, beaming forth in a fourfold stream, illumines all the rest, and animates it with superior life. The Genesis and

the Apocalypse, Beginning and End, are the mysterious handles of the holy vessel, which we must first rightly take hold of, so as to grasp, hold, and bear, the ark of the divine word. I embrace this opportunity of explaining unreservedly, in opposition to the author and others, my views and convictions respecting the Genesis and the right explanation of it. After all that has been just enunciated above, it will no longer be ambiguous, in the sequel it will become still more evident, in what sense I find the key mentioned above, which, well applied, is alone able to decipher the great riddle of the primitive world, and to infuse light into the chaos of the olden traditions. On the other hand, it can willingly be conceded, and should not be disregarded, that the hieroglyphical brevity of that Mosaic commencement would often enough stand in need of further amplification and of a commentary. For such a commentary, which it must be admitted is very essential, and would be highly instructive, the other Old-Asiatic, Indian, Egyptian, Persian, Chinese, traditions and documents present to us the most abundant materials, so soon as the right understanding of them shall have become accessible to us by the inner key, and with it the right order of the whole shall have been found. To consider all other Old-Asiatic traditions as mere delusive phantoms, void of all truth, would be most assuredly the greatest misunderstanding that can possibly be conceived, and never to be pardoned. If I, however, find in the Genesis a deeper meaning than that which may be spelt out of the commonest Hebrew vocabulary, I don't mean by that alone that esoteric elucidation known by the name of the Mosaic philosophy; for in this, at least in what has been so called for the last three or four centuries, there is much that is purely imaginative, arbitrary, unfounded, mingled with much that is profound and indisputably true. When asserting this, I have here principally and immediately in my eye all that is contained, and that not a little, in tradition and in the fathers of the Church, for the profounder interpretation of the Genesis; but above all, the light which the Genesis, as indeed the whole Bible, contains, from the connection existing between this whole, of which the former is a part and a member. As every great author is best explained by his own works, so likewise does the rule hold good more especially of this author, who is

justly to be termed great before all others; I am speaking of the Bible; for the divine word, even the written word, is a light which best illumines itself, and renders itself clear. The question here, therefore, neither is nor can be concerning an arbitrary accommodation-system, but that meaning, which even with philological strictness will continue to be the sole true one, which serves, too, as the base of all sublimer criticism, that is, a criticism which comprehends the spirit, and which understands in the spirit.

We make now the application of this with immediate respect to the historical assertions of the author. He reckons Moses (p. 7) among those who have represented the last great reformation and revolution of the earth as the creation of it, and who have connected it with the first commencement of man's history. The inaccuracy of this assertion is conspicuous, as we have already proved above, since the flood in the Zendavesta, produced by the enemy of nature and the dragon-star, is the same as Noah's, which Moses assigns to an epoch long posterior to the origin of the human race. If, however, in any part of the so-called history of creation in Moses, there is also meant a revolution or re-formation of the earth, this cannot in anywise be considered as the last (or the deluge); but it must have been another, an earlier one, and far more probably the last but one, just as the author in his way says (p. 31), "The probable commencement of the human race lies in the period between the two last re-formations." In another place he says, "That the human race at that great revolution of the earth was still near its origin, at least in comparison with the time which has since transpired, can hardly be doubted;" which, with the limitation added to it, likewise agrees very well with Moses.—Where now does the author, however, find the creation in Moses—in the first verse of the first chapter or in the following six days of creation also? In the first verse the question quite undeniably concerns the creation of all visible and invisible things; but as the earth, in the second verse, together with the water, is supposed to be already existing, and is described in its chaotic, dark, flooding state, it is evident that in the following six days of work the question cannot in any manner concern the first and proper creation of all things and the whole world from nothing, according to the Mosaic and Christian idea, but only be concerning a cosmical arrange-

ment, a reconstruction and fitting up of the earth as a dwelling-place for man, an organic vivification and filling of the same with living natures, the whole work being crowned by the creation of man. The author has here openly satisfied himself with that which is usual in the newer exegesis, by which it is easily comprehensible why his repugnance should have turned him from the bad commentaries, and even accompanied him to the text itself.<sup>4</sup> In such investigations as his are, it would have been desirable, if he had rather looked around him for the old way of elucidation,\* but especially had remarked with attention what really stands in Moses and what he properly himself says. Let us consider, therefore, in this respect, the whole text of the Mosaic six days of work, especially what precedes them in the first and second verse. "In the beginning God created heaven and earth;" that is, the spiritual world and the sensual world, or, as it is said in the *Symbolum* with evident relation to this beginning of Moses, "all invisible and visible things." He created them, and indeed in the Christian sense, which is also the Mosaic one, what "create" properly means, out of nothing. For the antithetical opinion of matter existing coevally with the world-spirit, equally eternal and consequently independent of it, which first was formed and ordered by God into the world, this opinion, which was the prevalent one among so many ancient nations, is expressly rejected and excluded by the words of Moses, and as has been often recognized by other learned men. The passage of "in the beginning," however, can here not so much apply to eternity, but, judging by the whole of the context, to the beginning of temporal creation.<sup>†</sup> In the second verse follows now at once

\* It is remarkable, how carefully the expressions of the old interpreters and church-fathers are continuously selected on this subject, so that the difference is most clearly defined, and no confusion to be thought of. Thus St. Justin says in his *Apology II.*, when speaking of the twofold cause, why the Christians celebrate the Sunday, and meet together on a Sunday, because Christ rose on this day, and principally, moreover, because this was the first day in which God changing darkness and matter, formed the order of the world. "*επειδὴν πρώτη ἐστὶν ἡμετέρα, ἐν ἣ ὁ Θεὸς το σκοτος καὶ τὴν ὕλην τρέψας, κόσμον ἐποίησε.*" How could he have selected these expressions, which evidently apply solely to a reinstitution and change of matter that had become dark, from the Mosaic history of the creation, if he had understood and regarded this as a proper first creation from nothing (according to Christian and therefore to his ideas?)

† The existence of another creation from eternity is not hereby ex-

the description of a state entirely<sup>1</sup> chaotic of the earth still wholly covered with darkness. "And the earth was without form and void,"—it was still without organic life. "And darkness was upon the face of the deep;" the earth was still without the beneficial influence of the light and all that is produced by it. Nevertheless all was already present, from out of which the future, better state was to proceed; for "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Earth and water, therefore, were here already present, although floating still quite chaotically in the darkness. By so much the less, therefore, can the two first verses be regarded and explained as mere superscription and compendium, the sequel of which contains as it were the further carrying out and gradual description of it. If one would also reduce to a mere superscription the endless contents of the first verse in this manner, with respect to the recapitulation in chap. ii., verses 1 and 4, this would not at all be applicable to the second verse, which contains and describes something quite different; such a violent interpretation would be here inconceivable, and impossible to be carried out. The first day-labours of the following history of creation relate just this, how the earth was brought out of that chaotic state, as described in the second verse, how it was organically arranged and fitted up as an abode for man. In the first and third days also nothing is contained that can be referred to or explained with respect to the first production and creation of the water or the earth. They are expressly supposed to be already existing, and all that is spoken of is the separation of the superior waters—the clouds, vapours, and misty night—from the inferior, as likewise of the sea from the main land that followed that influence of the light; moreover, of the clear

cluded, only it cannot be the one meant here. Christianity,—the Bible as well as the Church,—as is well known in the positive dogma, does not decide between the creation temporarily beginning, and the one from all eternity; but it might well be the proper task of Christian philosophy to pay due attention to both, each in its place, and by this very means first render manifest and clear the mystery of the creation. As far as regards the "in the beginning," I will merely remark, that in another passage of Scripture, where the first creature is spoken of, created indeed, but created from all eternity, the passage for that very reason cannot be interpreted as referring to the Son, to whom "ab initio" is emphatically adjoined "et ante omnia sæcula," in the words "Ego creata sum ab initio et ante omnia sæcula," &c.

firmament of heaven, which finally separated the old conflict of mists, and of the dam, which was placed on the earth against the flooding of the primitive waters. The question, therefore, here is not concerning the first creation of the earth; but it was a reinstitution, a new re-formation and fitting up of the earth, which preceded the creation of man, and precisely for this ultimate object was it arranged and disposed in order to serve him as an abode. Now, if all doubt be removed from this side, a question difficult to solve remains on the other. How does Moses, after his brief allusion to the primitive creation of all things, allude all at once to that chaotic state, which he describes with such wonderful energy in a few traits? Is God, the living God of Moses, a God who can create a chaos, the well-known Thohu and Bohu, an "earth without form and void?" This is not conceivable. Equally so, nay still less, can an uncreated chaos be assumed as coexistent with the true God, which would also be an absolute contradiction to the first verse. There is consequently a great gulf between the first and the second verse; not that it is an accidental hiatus, for assuredly nothing whatever is there, but with the deepest design. In order to fill it, it is also only permitted us to make that present, to re-present to our minds in short that which is actually certain from the Bible and Moses himself. God has created all beings good, and can have created no chaos. If spirits, however, which were free, fell off from God, the chaotic disorder, as the result of such lapse, is easily conceivable. This essential main dogma of the Christian revelation forms the basis everywhere of the Bible, of the Mosaic account itself, and is alluded to in countless passages. That desolator and founder of all disorder and darkness, that liar from the beginning, whom Moses immediately after introduces under the type of the serpent, without having previously spoken of his creation or his fall, which he silently presupposes, as well as so much besides, him we must think of as explicative of the passage. Not indeed as an arbitrary interpolation into the text of holy writ, but as a mere complement in our thoughts, as an elucidation for our understanding. In this manner the beginning of Genesis by this explication might be commented upon somewhat as follows:—"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," that is, the spiritual world and the sensual world; (but after that the first of created spirits had

fallen off from God, and had drawn down into perdition a great part of creation with him, thus—) “the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep,” and so on. So soon as the two first verses of Moses are properly understood, and the one main and fundamental error be removed, which confuses the contents of the two first verses, the following six days of work, the first creation of all things out of nothing, with the new formation of the world before the creation of man, then all obscurity disappears more and more from the parts which follow, and at all events the whole as it proceeds becomes clear and intelligible.

The calling forth and the first beaming of light is the fruitful germ from which, as the first point of beginning, the successive acts of this new cosmical arrangement and superior re-formation of the earth proceed in obedience to God's behest. The four first days of work and periods serve for giving to the earth that arrangement which it required as an habitation for man. No sooner were light and darkness separated, when the murky volume of clouds opens and disperses also, the firmament of heaven vaults itself in its bright clearness over the earth; sea and land divide and gain a firm boundary, and from out of the watered earth herbs and plants mount towards the light. Before it was yet day upon earth, before the beginning of light, in the old night, when the earth was still dark, sun and moon could not act upon it, were not present for it; but now the star of day and the lesser one of the night appeared and acted; they warmed and vivified the excited earth, and the glancing heavenly bodies began their sidereal revolutions. In the fifth and sixth days of work the earth is filled with living creatures, all of them subjected and serviceable to man, and the work closes with that, which is the crown and object of the whole,—with the creation of man; whereupon after the completed work comes the seventh day of rest, or Sabbath of God, as type of the human one according to the Mosaic dispensation. As the first moment of creation, in this work of the new formation of the world, is sufficiently expressed in the fiat of light through the eternal word, so also is this second in the creation of man; it is distinguished and exalted as such by both the importance and sublimity of the expression, that are quite unmistakable. On the other hand, in other minor productions allusion is made to a not immediate



bringing forth, as in the words, "And let the earth bring forth grass and herb; and the earth brought forth grass," &c.

If now the question should arise, what is then properly the main fact, that in an astronomical sense forms a base for the first days of work in this first Mosaic re-formation of the earth; this question would be perhaps not unanswerable. It would certainly of necessity be quite a simple fact, from which might easily be derived all that part of the Mosaic description having reference to geography or the science of the earth; for the creation of man in the divine image remains a subject independent of the rest, and appertains to another superior sphere of inquiry. The following thought may at all events be posed here as a question for our scientific knowledge, for our mental construction of the primitive edifice of the world. If we suppose for a moment that the earth once completed its revolution round the sun differently from what it now does, without daily rotation round its own axis, but somewhat as the moon about the earth, consequently with the same disk continually presented to the sun, or else as turning only once in the year round its axis; if we then would lay this question before any man versed in natural philosophy, how under such a supposition the earth at that time could possibly be constituted, the answer doubtless would upon the whole be to this effect: That the earth then could neither produce nor contain organic life, at least not any that would deserve to be called such in our sense according to the present constitution of it, exactly as Moses says, "The earth was without form and void." Moreover he would say, that without the vivifying influence of day and night, the earth might very possibly have been in that chaotic, dark-waving state, which Moses so emphatically depicts in that passage. Now, let the life-awaking beam of light radiate into the internal force, into the heart of the earth, and with the daily rotation on its axis let the pulse of its superior planetary life begin, then all that succeeds will spontaneously follow as it were. The light cleaves the clouds, the old heaving masses of mist open, the firmament of heaven spreads out above the body of the earth, on which both sea and land separate themselves also out of the heaving chaos. Vegetation bursts upwards from the moistened earth towards the light; the earth is now adapted for being filled with organic life of every description. If it

should be replied, that the supposition is impossible, because our planet from all eternity, according to a necessary law of nature, must have had its daily rotation on its own axis, we should require the most rigid proof of that. Some people are very apt to be far too prodigal with their supposed "eternal laws," since the development of nature, everywhere gradual, has been now again recognized by the masters of science, although not even yet perhaps to a sufficient extent, both in individual things and throughout the universe at large. If, however, the supposition be conceded as possible, all that follows becomes clear, and disengages itself quite naturally from that all-efficient point of beginning, the first radiation and impingement of light called forth by God, and which begins with the daily rotation on its axis of the earth. Of this ever memorable event, it then is with truth so graphically said, "And God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light day, and the darkness he called night. And the evening and the morning were the first day." These last words need now no longer be explained in a general, half-figurative sense, for they are at the same time also literally true. Our natural philosophy also will not be disinclined to recognize the miraculous nature of this first commencement of light, as likewise the development, so immeasurable as to its results, that ensued from that one life-fact of the daily rotation. Nevertheless, between all the fulness of organic development in life and the last in Moses,—“the creation of man in the divine image,” there still remains an unfathomable gulf, which no natural philosophy can ever fill up, for here it treads on ground not its own, where the investigation with the subject itself passes away from the region of natural development into the region of immediate revelation of the inner divine Being. We also can allow, without any scruples, what the author says (page 41), and even say with him, “As the earth was ripe for bearing the present crown of its organization, he appeared upon his stage.” Only the word “present” might lead us too far. Singularly enough, however, he adds, “But the time may come, when in the stream of development this period of the earth shall pass, in the collective relations of which the organism of man lay; he may at some time hereafter, in a still higher generated state of the earth, adhering as too

heavy, too much to the mass, sink without support, or pass over into still more spiritual forms." How clearly do we see here, that no sooner do we leave the firm ground of divine revelation, which teaches us to recognize that great mystery of God's image in the nature of man, and by that very means also to understand first the commencement of human history, what a boundless space is opened to us for scientific fancy to sport in! If the spiritual spark, for it can hardly be called divine on this occasion, if then the spiritual spark in man, which properly makes him man—call it reason and capability of speech, freedom or fancy—could be attached to this or that animal form, be degraded into it or again subtracted from it, we cannot fail perceiving why this should not be equally applicable to the past. The author might then, with quite as much reason, have been able to seek out for the men of the primitive world among the numerous races of elephants or the mammoths of primeval antiquity, as he opens to us, for the future, the prospect of man's transition into "still more spiritual forms." Since he by these forms does not understand, as we others do, the illumined bodies of the risen, but to all appearance only a lighter and a more pliant animal form and genus, somewhat as the winged inhabitants of the air may already give us an example, supposing us to have guessed the bold fancy of the author by a right conjecture.

We have thus followed to their extreme limits the natural-historical view and the hypothesis of the author. What has been hitherto said may serve as a first intimation for showing that the Genesis may be regarded differently from what the author appears to have done up to the present time. Now that we have therefore put aside that, which relates to geography in the primævo-historical time, to the old traditions and sacred documents treating of it, let us pass at once to the fourth result of the author concerning the primitive religion, and which is intimately connected to what has preceded. That which is contained in the second and third results concerning the primeval land after the last revolution of the earth, concerning the primitive people and their first emigrations, the primary language, together with our remarks thereon, will best remain for the close. The fourth result of the author is now as follows:—

“There was a primitive religion, from which all the religions of antiquity have proceeded.”

Undoubtedly the original religion in the first age of the world was only one; it was a religion of nature, that is, a veneration and adoration of God in nature, and of nature in God. All heathenism has arisen from this natural religion of the primitive world by further development, formation, or depravation. On this grade of heathenism stood the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans; the Indians stand thereon still; as also the Mahomedans, together with the Jews, have continued to stand, or have sunk back upon the second grade of a prophetic religion of law. That first natural religion is followed, for instance, by a second epoch in the history of religion, which the author himself recognizes as such, and very appropriately denominates the doctrine of revelation, or after his fashion of expressing it, “saga of revelation” (page 65 and *passim*); this is that religion which is no longer confined to the universal revelation of God in nature, but is founded on a special revelation (true or accepted as such), in the person of a religious founder, sent for this purpose, who for the most part is at the same time the national lawgiver, and who founds the newly announced religion on a written law. Among these the author himself will of course include the doctrine of Zoroaster besides that of Moses. Of these religions now in the second epoch, which are founded on a special revelation and a written law, it cannot well be said “that they have proceeded from the primitive religion.” On the contrary, it is the depravation, the degeneration of the primitive religion, which gave rise to the religion of the revealed law, the founders and announcers of which, for the most part, found themselves diametrically opposed to, or in a continued struggle with, the old heathenism. When they, however, stepped forward also as the restorers of the purer, older, or oldest religion, they were essentially distinguished from this latter by the peculiar and new basis of a special revelation, and by the form of a written law. Hence Zoroaster, in his whole character as the proper founder of a religion, entirely belongs to this second epoch; and we cannot avoid observing why the author wishes to thrust him back to a far earlier period (p. 4), since the Zend books themselves contain no authority for so doing, and historical evidence is

all against it. If Pliny and other ancients speak of one or of several still older Zoroasters, this on the one hand is a very common shift, so as to be enabled to unite all, however heterogeneous or irreconcilable, that is somehow ascribed to a great national founder in the primitive age. On the other hand, it could be also very naturally referred to the former enlightened teachers in the Zend or Parsee tradition, especially to Hom or Hemo, at the time of Jenjid, and to the still older Hosheng, from which latter the worship of fire is derived. But both these personages belong to the first era of the world; they are Pishdadians, saints of the primitive world, and witnesses of the truth before the written law of the great Persian-Median religious founder. (Cruizer, i. p. 670.)

Heathenism is in sooth capable of the very greatest diversity in its local development, precisely because it is a religion of nature, just as the fancy happens to cull from the endless abundance of nature what most pleases it, and as that nature reveals itself in the immediate neighbourhood, it shapes out also further what it has so culled. But because it is a religion of nature, and so long as it remains only as such, is it essentially one and the same. The most important difference, the most important in its consequences, is that which takes place between the cult of the elements and of fire, as obtaining with the shepherd and nomad tribes, and between the sidereal natural worship of agricultural nations. Even here there is, however, no positively absolute separation; transitions and comminglings between both kinds of the old natural worship are plentifully found. The sole difference that might be first established between that which is essentially one in its first foundation, though capable of an infinitely varied evolution, would be the one between a heathenism with God, and a heathenism without God. A heathenish religion entirely without God will not easily be found, at least among those nations who possess a tradition and are historically known to us. Thus here again, also, everything rests on a More or Less, on the degree of strength and clearness with which, or on the different form in which, the idea of the true God steps forth from the chaos of natural mythology. Here now is the point where I must separate from the author, inasmuch as he does the greatest injustice to

the original, pure heathenism of the primitive world, when he asserts, that for it "God and nature were still one" (pp. 22 and 59), that they consequently knew nothing whatever of the true God, did not recognize God in nature, regarded, however, nature in God, worshipped only in the main nature solely and alone. This would be in itself clearly considered, not well imaginable, for we cannot well assume that error preceded truth. Moreover it is contradicted by all historical evidence, all old traditions and documents. It rather suits our modern men of science and natural philosophers to lose God in nature, and that both should become one. Even our author speaks once quite incidentally of "eternal natural laws;" a phrase which we can pardon in the mouths of regular men of science and ordinary natural philosophers for denoting that, which nature has once accepted and presupposed, which appears to be equally necessary with her, and is cognized as such. It should, however, be excluded in primitively historical research, which requires the greatest accuracy of expression. What can be named eternal in nature, that is not to be sought for in laws, but in that which is exalted above the laws, and which precisely by this proclaims itself as free and divine. Should the author, however, really consider nature as eternal, I should much like to hear how he has acquired this remarkable knowledge. In the olden time that interchange and blending of God with nature does not at all take place in the manner the author presumes, not even there where naturalism predominates. Very definitely can we distinguish and extract in the old heathen religions the idea of the true, or in order to denote it very markedly in contradistinction to naturalism, of a supra-sensual, transcendental or metaphysical God, from the polytheistic additaments and the mythological accompaniments. The difference is here only solely this, that in some systems of heathenism, as in the Indian, Persian, and Chinese, partly also in the Egyptian, which in this respect forms the transition to the Grecian mythology, the metaphysical idea of God, much as this idea may be polytheistically deformed subsequently, nevertheless forms as it were the core and the soul, the centre, beginning, and summit of the whole. On the other hand, in the heathenism of the Greeks, and of kindred nations, the same idea becomes completely covered and

obscured by mythology, and only breaks out in detached passages, as especially in the mysteries; here and there, too, out of them, and then in a manner that is entirely unmistakable. With respect to the Greeks, this will scarcely require any further proof after Creuzer's great researches. The definition, so entirely metaphysical, of the supreme God, in the Indian and Persian sacred books, is evident to any one. Concerning the religion of the other old nations, it will be easy to decide from these fundamental traits, whether they belong more to the one or to the other class. The Jehovah of Moses, say more recent critics, is a mere national God of the Jews; but the word itself is already quite metaphysically formed (the Indian Suayambhu, may, first out of the old languages, correspond to it); this is still more confirmed by other Mosaic definitions of the same God, as, The "I am" sends Moses, "I am, that I am." Thus this name of Jehovah, according to its entire etymology, may signify nothing else, save him, who is there and is manifest, who was there and will be there; not being in the indefinite universal ens, generally speaking, but being there, that is, existing, that is, manifesting or revealing himself. This four-formed (*τετραγαμματον*) and mysterious name therefore defines especially the God of Revelation, on which account the older Latin church language translates this word every time by *DOMINUS*. That Jehovah, regarded also historically, is, according to Moses, not merely a national God, and not merely peculiar to the Jews, is clear from the blessing of Noah, where it is expressly said, may Jehovah be the God (the Elohi) of Shem and his posterity;\* that is, in other words, the descendants of Shem are not without a knowledge of the true and living God. We should here peculiarly think also of the Persians, who descended from the race of Shem, their religion being always so carefully and evidently separated in Scripture from actual idolatry: strictly taken, it cannot be classed with heathenism, for the Persians were imbued with a similar abhorrence like to that

\* In the usual Protestant German translation of the Bible this is not correctly given, inasmuch as the two denominations of God, which the Vulgate at all times very carefully distinguishes, are arbitrarily confounded, so that it now reads, "Blessed be God, the Lord of Shem," instead of being as in the real text, "Blessed be Jehovah, the Elohi of Shem," by which transposition the deeper meaning is entirely lost.

which pervades the bible of the Egyptian sidereal idolatry ; so that it is almost saying too little, when a talented English scholar very aptly names the Persians the puritans of heathenism. In the blessing of Noah, that benefit of the real knowledge of God is still much more extensively increased, as it is openly said of Japhet in the same relation, " he shall dwell in the tents of Shem ;" which also at this present time has so abundantly been fulfilled among the western nations mostly descended from Japhet. The first general primitively historical part of the Genesis cannot have been at all attended to, or understood, if in this respect Moses is reproached with an intolerant narrow spirit of nationality. On a closer inspection, it will much rather become clear, that Moses it is who gives us the correct and pure idea of the simple natural religion prevailing in the primitive world, such as it was before Judaism and the religion of the written law, and from which all heathenism derived its origin.

What properly confines and impedes the author in this entire question concerning the origin and the original constitution of religion is the difficulty, not easily solved it is true, which he well feels, how the idea of the true God first occurred to man and generally speaking could enter his mind. As the author, among the various attempts to answer this question, mentions, among the other essays, my own assertion, contained in the work of mine, entitled " On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians," that this could only take place by an immediate revelation, but which as well as all the others appear unsatisfactory to him (pp. 48 and 59), I will briefly attempt a very definite explanation of it. This is one of those points where primitively-historical research comes into unavoidable contact with philosophy ; a contact which the author would fain elude, but which, in this latter part of his work, he can in nowise avoid. Now, if it is a free, living philosophy, not such a one as founds a system from abstractions, we cannot then well see how such a philosophy could exercise any disturbing influence on primitively-historical research, which the author very justly could only be apprehensive of from that philosophy which is shrouded in a system hampered in a maze of abstractions. Concerning the origin of the idea of God in man, the following modes of explaining it, or nearly so, are employed. If this idea is



begotten and produced by the reason through itself and from its own personality, the origin of the idea of God is also equally explained from itself ; only the existence of God out of the idea, and apart from it, is then inexplicable ; this idealistic difficulty, not being by any means the opinion of the author, we shall not enlarge upon, as this view is besides, in its full strictness, peculiar to a few thinkers only, and can never become a general mode of thinking. By so much the more generally is the opinion diffused, which supposes the natural man attains the idea of God from mere sensual perceptions, images, and feelings, by a gradual exaltation, purifying and refining of them ; where the idea then appears to be in itself a compound one and relative to its origin as accidentally occasioned, it consequently loses all reality ; the author appears to lean to this latter view in one respect which we shall hereafter further allude to, though he upon the whole admits the unsatisfactory nature of this explanatory mode also. In point of fact it is but a mere mock-thought, which, if we attempt to throw light more nearly upon it, does not become clear and intelligible, cannot indeed be worked out by thought. In its very best sense, and most favourably interpreted, it could only be explained as a re-finding and a gradual stepping forth of the idea of God, which then must have been implanted previously in man. This last is the base of the third acceptance, of which we are the advocates. What we call reason and other similar qualities and powers, that we distribute and apportion to men, they are but mere distributions and qualities on the surface of the outward semblance of man. In his real inward essence, man consists of two things only—mind and soul. This is precisely the essence of man, that he is not mind alone, but a mind that is united to soul and forming with it one. Now, if the mind as well as the soul have and can have originally no other object save God, if He is the first thought of every created mind and the original object of the sentient soul, why then the idea of God is to be considered as innate in man. It is now no longer inexplicable how this idea can be developed in him even by an external cause and can be again elicited, since it lies originally in him. This reawakening is always possible to whatever degree mind and soul may be diverted, perplexed, confused by other and external objects ; because the thought,

which is to be evoked anew, was for both the first, the original one. We may also aptly term such a reawakening of the innate idea in man of God a reminiscence, in the Platonic or in some similar sense. This reminiscence, however, remains imperfect so long as it is nothing more than such, and only a faint presentiment, in an image as it were, of what it would fain substantially comprehend. A vast chasm still lies between this presentiment and the immediate consciousness of his Being, which can only be effected and explained by the object itself, by actual contact with God. Why should this, if it was from the beginning, be not possible also in every subsequent period, although surpassing the earthly sense? Because this inner ray of the Eternal beams forth since all time, and the immediate conscious perception of the Divinity is at once there, swiftly and rapidly as the lightning is kindled before our sensual eye; it is hence named illumination, like the creative commencement of light in nature. Such is the maxim posed in this view, that all recognition of God depends on immediate illumination. Now, if to this illumination an external direction and operation, a mission and divine command be adjoined, then it is what is denominated in a special sense a personal revelation, what is attributed to the proclaimers and founders of the true religion and living recognition of God. Belief or faith, however, is the adhering to an illumination not its own, it is an apprehending and comprehending of it, which without some inward illumination of its own is not conceivable, if the belief shall not be a mere external one, that merely utters the letter without reflection, and, therefore, properly would be also without internal conviction. Thus everything comes back to the principle of illumination, as the first source for the recognition of God. In the hope that this explanation will now be sufficiently palpable and definite, I will, in order to obviate all misconception, annex, that consequently, in conformity with this principle, metaphysics form an entirely empiric and positive science, "which cannot be communicated to those who do not possess of it the idea that results from experience." This is, however, reserved for another commentation; let us here apply what has been laid down to the constitution and nature of the primitive religion. I understand One originally good and true religion in a far

more ample sense than the author does; and it will now be easy to explain how I could assert, that the original and pure heathenism, of which we now find almost everywhere only the degenerate state, was the true religion of nature, which recognizes God in nature, but also surveys nature in God, without regarding on that account "both as one." It was this illumination which the saints of the primitive world possessed, and which, also Moses expressly attributes to some of them. If now this divine illumination be not lost sight of, we can also concede another natural subordinate one as coexistent, that "mental instinct," for instance (p. 59), by means of which the men of the primeval world, because they themselves still stood in a closer and more intimate psychical contact and connection with nature, and by this, notwithstanding they were without our machines, experiments, and calculations, knew much of nature, recognized with perfect clearness, wielded and used with perfect facility what we, with all our reckonings and machines, are not able to comprehend yet so correctly. Since all the analogies of natural science and so many historical facts, which otherwise would remain wholly inexplicable, speak for this assumption and this higher psychical view to be employed here, it appears only to be a sceptical wilfulness of the author, when he wishes to set this aside with such peremptory abruptness (p. 59).

The illumination, however, which was the source of religion among the saints of the primeval world, is to be carefully distinguished from the special revelation and personal mission of the proper founders of religion, of the prophetic national lawgivers, who belong to the second era of the world. It is remarkable what the Genesis shortly imparts concerning some pious and illuminated men of the first age. The first purely historical mentioning of this description is that of Enos, who first addressed Jehovah by that name; that wonderful and mysterious name, "before which all knees shall bend, that are in heaven and earth and beneath the earth." In the text it says, as is well known, "in whose time" the name of Jehovah was first invoked. Although the compiler or arranger of the Vulgate may have had his peculiar reasons for preparing that reading, which ascribes personally to Enos this new and great event, the discovery of

prayer, or whatever else may be contained in it ; still this is by so much the more evident, that Enos, on this account, is by no means to be considered as a proper founder of religion in the later sense. To this remote age, therefore, does Moses assign the age of the pure adoration of Jehovah ; of Enoch however (the Idris of the modern Orientals, and the Kapila of the Indians, to whom the oldest Indian philosophy is assigned, at a time previous to the whole development of their degenerate mythology, and long antecedent to the comparatively modern Vedanta-system), of this Enoch, known also to the other Asiatic traditions, Moses says, “ he lived in God,”\* mentioning and repeating three times the name of Elohim, by which, in such a respect, an especial divine spiritual force and illumination are at all times implied, somewhat as in later times the wonderful Elias is named a man of Elohim ; so that “ he lived in God,” if we might be allowed a certain circumscription, might be best termed—“ he walked in the strength of Elohim.” Of Noah, it is said again, he found grace before Jehovah ; and, moreover, he lived in God ; or as we have attempted to express it, “ he walked in the strength of Elohim.” In this saint of the Mosaic primitive world we meet again with the theory of the author. He makes a broad distinction between the proper idea of revelation and the mere pious natural feeling of the primeval ages ; he endeavours also to explain in his own way the origin of the first, which appears to him to have always been unsuccessfully attempted as yet. The horrid event of the last revolution of the earth, where nature showed herself so dire and hostile to man, led, in the grateful feeling of being saved, to the idea of a Being, exalted above nature, quite distinct from it ; that from this the doctrine of revelation sprang. Thus the French antiquity-philosophers derive the origin of all religion from that frightful catastrophe to the world, and assign its commencement to fear, to a fancy excited by terror. The author has taken up this view in a more noble and enlarged view, inasmuch as he attributes it more to a feeling of gratitude towards the great Saviour than to a feeling of terror at that awful event. We may accept and understand, I admit,

\* In God ; in order to express at one and the same time all the significations of the particle Eth אלהים, with and to God.

quite in this sense the great thank-offering and natural sacrifice of Noah in the Mosaic account ; and, indisputably, that dread event in nature must have conducted in many ways to awaken religion and the feeling of God, to reanimate it, or to give it a new direction. The idea of God, however, could not have been first attained by man in consequence of this, if it had not been originally implanted in him. But in no way is it correct to consider as the whole, to wish to pass it off as such, what is only *one* moment in the history of the oldest religion, and what forms only one moment in the question respecting the origin and the first development of the same. The last, whom Moses mentions in a similar relation and designation, is Melchisedek, who, although he lived in the time of Abraham, yet as being such before the call of the latter, must be classed with the before-mentioned saints of the primitive world. By this very circumstance he forms a new point of union, through which the popularly historical part of the Genesis becomes linked to the primitively historical part (*see above*). Although he is named a priest of the most high God, in a threefold repetition of this special divine name (El Eliun), and as such, offers to Abraham a type of the highest bloodless sacrifice (according to the pious custom of the primitive world), he can, nevertheless, standing quite alone and apart, be regarded, in nowise, and quite as little as those named before, as a proper religious founder, and as a prophetic lawgiver. To this class, which dominates over the second era of the world, belongs, above all, besides Moses, Zoroaster ; then the Indian Gautama, as that mind, which altered everything in India (who founded the Nyaya philosophy, who gave rise to the Vedanta-system as an antithesis to the former, and restored the equipoise against innovation by the remodelling of the old doctrine). His historical name is called by the numerous followers of his religion Buddha (*sapiens, intelligentia, verbum*) ; moreover, Confucius and other prophetic national legislators down to Mahomet. All these were no common, ordinary men, but men fitted with extraordinary qualities and gifts. Whether, however, it was merely a sidereal natural force, or also a bad and demoniacal mental power ; or, whether it was the spirit of God, the force of Elohim, and the light of Jehovah, which impelled them, and in which they taught and worked ; this

must certainly be first investigated and attentively deliberated on. Undoubtedly, the idea of God must have become thoroughly clear and certain to ourselves, before we can decide between the true and the false revelation, which subject cannot be further discussed in this place.

Now that we have seen in what manner Moses relates the knowledge of the true God, even in the primitively historical time of the first mundane era, and before the people of Abraham,—how he significantly and pointedly alludes to it in the four points, each constituting an epoch, of Enos, Enoch, Noah, and Melchisedek,—it is now the place to say a word concerning the view of nature as contained in his account, how it is enunciated especially in the primitively historical part of his sacred tradition, in the history of that first time, when no written law had as yet been given, and when man recognized God only in the revelation of nature, but viewed nature, however, in God. Every kind of natural cult, or even of natural worship, is of course strictly excluded from the Mosaic document. This does not efface the visible presence of a pure adoration for the divine principle in nature, a deep contemplation of all the essence and action in nature. Let us cast a look now in this respect on the Mosaic history of the earth's creation. Much that is both bright and clearly defined starts at once to our view; much, too, is passed over in silence, or with brief allusion, as if lost, placed in the background, which is not unoften the case in the Genesis, as also in the representation of nature and the earth's formation. Thus the first breath of life, that which is properly alone real in nature, the element of air, is nowhere expressly and emphatically mentioned, except where Jehovah Elohim breathes the "breath of life" into the son of earth formed of loam (ch. ii. v. 7). In the second verse of the history of the creation, commented on above, where the Spirit of God moves upon the waters before the commencement of the new formation of the earth, as the question concerns an influence purely local and defined, entirely physical and divine, and the word Ruach רֵיחַ means besides "the breath of life," we can also conceive, a natural medium of the divine force and omnipotence, in the universal element of life, the air, as preparing the creative act of nature's palingenesis. In the Mosaic formation of the earth, however, and in his mode

generally of representing nature, light occupies the first place, as we have sufficiently had opportunity above of showing and referring to. As generally, in the biblical doctrine and language, grace in man is so often represented under the figure of light, so by alternation is light depicted in Moses, and other parts, as the immediate divine principle, as a beam of grace in nature dispensed by God, not indeed absolutely and independently,<sup>s</sup> but revered and exalted as a herald and announcer of God's majesty. In the Mosaic formation of the world, light is the first awakener and exciter of higher earthly life, the great renovator in nature, which in its passage parts the old confusion, and creates order in that which is now separated clearly and firmly. In the first series of the Mosaic days of work, the element of light is successively followed by water, earth, and by the plants that spring towards the light out of the earth made teeming by water; all of them elements or productions of nature closely allied. Fire is nowhere expressly mentioned, as light is, although it otherwise serves in Moses not merely as a figure or type, but even as the medium for the appearing of God in the pillar of fire, in the flaming bush, &c. Fire, abstractedly considered, is more an element of destruction for annihilation or purification, than a principle of life and the forming of the world; only when moderated, veiled and latent does it work as such in the warmth of the sun, or as vital flame in the veins of creatures animated with blood. In this form and respect it is fundamentally placed in the second series of the Mosaic days of work, where the ordering of the vivifying stars, and the production of living inhabitants on the earth, in all departments of nature, are briefly reported. The genial warming sun, and the moon (the latter powerfully influencing fermentation, growth, and production, according to the view of all ancient nations and many modern natural philosophers, is always to be considered a principle of vital warmth, even if very much depressed), lead us, as the ruling luminaries of day and night, back again to the light, which in Moses forms the beginning, and always remains the first. The abundance and fruitfulness of the living creatures of the earth, in their nourishing and propagation of numerous races, are considered and praised here with delight, as well as often in subsequent passages, by Moses, as a living blessing of

God. The return to the light, however, is here also given and implied by the thing itself, in the living creatures animated with blood, especially in man, the crown of all earthly ones. From the water, or from the earth made fruitful by water, the plant grows up towards the light and lives through it; and yet the flower, as summit of the plant, although entirely surrendering itself and inclining towards the light, is only a longing after it, that remains unsatisfied, and does not break forth into the real eye. It is the eye, and not immediately the voluntary movement, which many genera of animals have in so slight a degree, or almost not at all, and which the plants on the other hand periodically reapproach; it is the sun-percipient eye\* that makes the animal such, and the living what they really are; the eye which, in the crown of all mundane living things, in man, directed straight, like the flower, to the light, beams forth in the wonderful circle of his face itself as a double sun. Now what is this external light, and the visible sun, in comparison with the inward eye, by means of which man sees the light in his mind, which shines everlastingly, and by this alone becomes an image of God, a refulgence and reflection of his glory? Thus, on the sixth day of work is closed with man what was begun on the first with light; and in the seventh division of time follows now the repose of God, after the entire completion of the work. If the light, as the most spiritual thing in the sensual world, forms the sole tropical point, which we also find again among the other old Asiatic nations in similar dignity, the other is visibly found in the peculiar biblical view respecting the blood, how it is the soul-conferring and hidden vital fire in all living things, the secret laboratory and the sanctuary of life, hallowed by God, which is susceptible of so many injuries, and for that very reason to be treated with the most prudential awe. Thus it is said of Abel, not to mention the bloody sacrifices, that his blood cries out to God from the ground, which had opened its mouth to receive it from the hand of the murderer. When man, too, after the flood, instead of his previous mild vege-

\* "Were not the eye sunlike,

How could it catch the power of the light?"

is said in a beautiful old (German) verse, a proverbial saying which has been taken up and applied extensively in philosophy.



table diet (ch. i. v. 29) of a happier primeval world, had assigned to him for food living creatures,\* he is at the same time warned not to touch the blood. Yet now, remarkably enough, immediately after the terrible catastrophe in nature, the law is also proclaimed of legal blood-vengeance and retaliatory putting to death. The view in the Bible respecting blood, as the other tropical point of the Mosaic contemplation of nature, penetrates into the very core of the Mosaic law. Hence we cannot here follow this thread any further. In what sense, however, also, according to Moses, the cult of the primitive world was a religion of nature, that is peculiarly evident from what is said at the creation and mission of Adam, of his original relation to nature, over which he is placed as lord and ruler, as a real king, and consequently also as high priest of the same, as it is only to serve and be used to the glorification of God. In this sense, and in the function of a king and high priest of nature, must the passage be explained and interpreted, where it says of Adam that he gave their names to all living things on the earth. As to the so-called origin and first lisping of a semizoic natural language, according to the modern favourite interpretation (that is, abolition and explaining away of the divine mind), this passage can, for that very reason, not be understood, at least not in our view and signification of language, because it is expressly said "Jehovah" brought all creatures before Adam, to whom he then gave their names. Such things do not stand for nought in Moses. Even our usual representations of a blissful sloth of man in Paradise are not quite correct, nor Mosaicly authorized. Adam is expressly placed by God in Paradise, "to dress it and to keep it." "To keep it," that is, to defend it; fighting against the enemy, who yet contrived afterwards to creep in.

\* Man has the teeth of both genera of animals, the carnivorous and those which feed on plants. From this, however, merely follows, that he was destined and organically constituted to enjoy a great variety of different articles of sustenance, and also when dressed. For to assume that man was originally created a carnivorous rapient animal, is opposed to all probability, contradicting point blank the plainest declarations in the oldest and most sacred traditions, that the first food of man was a vegetable one, decidedly also to be hardly reconciled with Christianity, and the view which this and Christian philosophy gives us of the first man and his original condition.

"To dress it," certainly not for the common necessities of life, as afterwards, when "the ground was cursed for his sake;" therefore to what other object should it be cultivated, unless to the ever greater glorification of God?

Now that we have put aside or opposed with fitting argument all that concerns the science of the earth and the last revolutions of it in the primitively historical research of the author, moreover have dilated on the origin and the original nature of religion, touching on the Zendavesta and everything which the author deems remarkable in it, also the properly understood sense of the Genesis, and all this as copiously as was here possible, we turn now to the author's opinion of the primitive language, this being the subject most nearly allied to the foregoing. In sooth it is with the investigation into the origin and original constitution of the first language, as with the question concerning the origin of religion. The point is here just as it was there, whether we shall begin forthwith with that which really is the first everywhere, with the mind in its effectivity, or shall attempt to worm out the mind gradually from the sensual maze, to fasten it on behind as an accidental excrescence. It was remarkable to us, how the author does not so much hold the middle path between both these opinions as he is divided between them. The one opinion, which makes language artificially work itself up by degrees to a form of reason and a spiritual importance from out of a mere animal cry or of an utterance that imitates a sound in nature, receives the author's sanction by the maxim (p. 43, and the following pages), that the primitive language must have been monosyllabic. The other opinion, which considers that language may have very possibly commenced with the purest and with a spiritual importance, and which regards the less cultivated languages as degraded ones, so far captivates him, that he sees and acknowledges the inward inseparable connection (p. 76) between the polysyllabic, organically articulated and constructed language, and the wonderful discovery (p. 73) of alphabetical writing. Nevertheless, it is necessary that we at once remove to entirely historical ground in this investigation, for the primitive language—properly so to be termed, and at all events decidedly ante-historical—is separated by too wide a chasm from us and our present state, that neither the author's, nor even my own researches, would be

able to throw the requisite bridge across, so as to open again a way for general communication with that "lost word" of the primitive language. That would be for instance the language to be called **really** primitive in the right sense, which Moses in the passage above mentioned alludes to, and which is actually meant in it according to our opinion, during the time that Adam still possessed the divine fiat in nature; that he executed this sway of nature, not indeed by his own power and authority, but by God's will and license, under Jehovah's guidance and assistance, till he sank into that pernicious sleep through which he succumbed to the power of the senses. Later also, when man had fallen sick in his sin (Enos is the man called, and the radical signification implies "sick"), when he had found again the mysterious, miraculous name of the true God, had called upon it for help from the depth of his misery, this could not happen without his having necessarily found, recognized, and discovered the inner, essential, real names of very many natural powers and things contemporaneously with that supreme word. But all this, as more suitable to Christian philosophy, to which it unquestionably in part belongs, the author would rather have excluded from the primitively historical research. We, therefore, will not pursue this way any longer, and will immediately enter with the author on the purely historical ground, where, among the old and oldest languages actually and virtually known to us, the difference between the polysyllabic and monosyllabic presents itself to us as the proper main point for the whole investigation. Here we certainly find a language of a nature completely monosyllabic, of inconceivable old age, and, at the same time, of the most artificial formation,—namely, the Chinese. On this side, it would be difficult to decide concerning the most ancient rank of the one or the other kind, especially if considered in a merely historical point of view with respect to time. But the sole question is properly, which was the main stem and which the lateral branch. On the other hand, the question concerning the intrinsic value is easily decided. The polysyllabic languages are entirely, even into the innermost threads of the living tissue, formed organically in the roots as in the grammatical form, and that deeply pervading etymological relationship which has interwoven itself almost over the whole

surface of the earth, through all the branches of the Indian, Greek, Latin, Persian, and German languages, and which is in remoter connection also with the Phœnician and Arabian, doubtless too with the whole of the Slavonic tongues. The monosyllabic language, on the other hand, has no really internal, organic life, but forms a mere aggregate of isolated tones, which, without inner development as it became more and more enlarged, passes off at last into an endlessly artificial system of the most arbitrary and wholly conventional language of signs, as among the Chinese, where at length the chaos of the accepted writing-ciphers must come to the succour of the indescribable poverty and ambiguity of the oral language, so as to become barely intelligible. Picture-writing, from the Mexican painting, through all the symbolico-priestly secret language of the Egyptian hieroglyphs down to the endlessly artificial cipher-chaos of the Chinese, will ever remain subordinate. Even in the author's eyes it will, who recognizes the "amazing discovery" (p. 73) of letters, as inseparably connected with the formation of the polysyllabic or organic language, and who assigns the highest antiquity to this discovery of writing (pp. 73 and 76); nay he seems inclined to regard it as original, that is, entirely coeval with the first awaking of the human mind. The author, however, has not stated more circumstantially in what this connection consists between the polysyllabic languages and alphabetical writing, although it may undeniably be shown. Alphabetical writing is founded on a decomposing, very artificial if you will, but perhaps also from very natural causes, of each human tone into its single and simple elements. Now the formation of a language thus growing up from polysyllabic roots depends on such a discomposing of the object denoted. It is not an apish vocal imitation of the external object, an involuntary exclamation of the internal state, as in the monosyllabic languages, but a really mental comprehension of all the different inward or outward vital actions and demonstrations of power. It is polysyllabic in the first roots, which are already limbed and even words. It is, therefore, not merely uttered according to the rude total impression, but mentally analyzed according to the dynamic constituent parts and its internal elements. To these, such as they are in nature, may well correspond in varied and deep analogy the elements also of the human voice analyzed and

dissected into vowels, consonants, into the spiritual breathing and accent. This then would be the proper wonder of human language, if we otherwise wish to give sufficient weight at length to the historical proofs against a groundless theory based on old prejudice of universal and original sensuality and want of mind, in order not to deny any longer a communication of speech, originally true and essential, that is to be called really human. This was and still is far more than a play of deception and caprice, composed of animal cries, of a few images and arbitrary signs. Hence, therefore, can be first perfectly explained the inner connection, pointed out in general by the author, of alphabetical writing with polysyllabic language, as they both are based on the same dynamical analysis and taking up both of the inner elements of the human voice, and of the phenomena in life, as the object of language; they are based also on the shaping out of those elements to an organic form, a property that remains in each development to what has been so taken up in its elements and dynamically united, because the germ for it lay already in the first origin. This dynamical or vitally spiritual mode of taking up and appropriating the elements of speech is what forms the grand and essential difference between the two different classes of primitive languages, the polysyllabic-organic and the monosyllabic-aggregate languages. The author, by acknowledging the connection between alphabetical writing and the organic languages, admits at once their higher rank with respect to inward worth and spiritual contents, and to such languages belong the Indian, the Latin and Greek; then in a somewhat more remote line the German and Persian; still more remotely and partly in another manner the Arabico-Syriac and Slavonic tongues. But the author cannot refuse them either the chief rank with respect to time and age, provided that the discovery of alphabetical writing is of such high antiquity as he asserts (pp. 73 and 76), or if it was perhaps original, as he appears to assume. The existence of primitively old original languages of the monosyllabic class, which class must ever be regarded as a branch and offshoot of that first lingual stem, can easily be explained, as soon as we concede "a sinking back of language" as conceivable, such as the author does, who meets us here half way (p. 76), and who explains not less ingeniously than satisfactorily that "sinking back of language" by the "forgetting of writing," namely, of

alphabetical characters, inseparable from it. Here, however, we must remember, that that fall of the mind, attributable perhaps to many and different causes, will occasion also a decadence of language, and that this therefore may take place in more ways than one. As far as the signs of writing are concerned, the author might have mentioned, besides the picture-writing, and the elementary signs, or letters, another kind also of mathematical, or real signs, which render the thought or object entirely by one sign, corresponding to the essence of the thing itself, without pictorial reference or arbitrary assumption. To these belong the Indian decimal figures, imparted to us through the medium of the Arabs; a discovery, which deserves no less to be named astonishing, than that of literal characters. At least we cannot help seeing how this entirely corresponds to a real sign in the straight stroke as mark of unity, in the three-pronged figure of the three; the denoting of nought by the circle is also especially remarkable, although all the figures have either not preserved their original form, or this is no longer to be recognized in them. The Indian decimal figures are then distinguished from those signs of notation that are composed, like the Roman ones, of strokes placed alongside of another, or of initial letters, by this, that these ever form merely an aggregate of numbers mechanically placed near one another, whereas in the Indian decimal system the true inner elements of all number are vividly and dynamically seized and organically disposed. Hence, also, the whole world of numbers can be turned to account with so much life and wonderful efficacy in comparison with the pitiful aid that is derived from a mechanical notation of numbers. In this respect the decimal arithmetic has precisely the same relation to the mechanical arithmetic notation, that the elementary notation of alphabetical writing has to the typical or conventional word-writing; there is a great analogy between the two. To this class belong also the remarkable metaphysico-mathematical real signs of the Chinese, which depend on the same cause. I mean the eighth Koua and symbols composed of them, consisting of one straight and one broken line, as signs of unity and duality (the Platonic *ἑρερον*), from which, step by step, several compositions, according to the manifold, mathematically possible cases, are formed with a very ingenious signification.

But since this metaphysical linear writing could by no means suffice for the whole extent of the language and the abundance of the phenomena in life to be denoted, it came then, notwithstanding the absence of the elementary signs, to that immeasurable chaos of ciphers which distinguishes the Chinese language from all others. These dynamic real signs are assuredly not to be overlooked in any future investigation into the origin and the original nature of alphabetical writing, for they in all that is essential stand probably much nearer to it than every hieroglyphical or pictorial writing. We do not mean to deny that many alphabets contain to some extent individual traces of a pictorial nature. How far the arrow-headed writing entirely belongs to one of these kinds, or perhaps forms a medial link and a point of transition from the one mode of typifying a language to the other, cannot yet be regarded as definitively ascertained.

If now the question is, in a merely historical sense, concerning a human primitive language, we must entirely set aside what has been alluded to above concerning the essence of the creatively active word in a philosophical sense, or what occurs in old theology. It is also decidedly not unknown to the Zendavesta, but is mentioned there by the name of Honover, the Zend appellation for that metaphysical idea of the eternal word, which in all that is essential agrees with the Mosaic and Christian idea of the divine fiat. Historically taken, the primitive language, according to what has been said above, can only be sought for in the class of the organically formed languages, since we must recognize this as the main stem and parent-stock of human languages, in accordance with all that the author himself concedes. Not that any one in particular among these is to be fixed upon, as being that one, from which all the rest must have been derived, as perhaps something, that I said in my work on India about the Sanscrit, has been misunderstood contrary to my intention, or as, perhaps, our author might appear, here and there, inclined to assign to the Zend language the first place at all events among all the others, as likewise to the Zend tradition the greatest age. In the comparative analysis, either directed to etymological concordance, or to the structure of grammatical configuration, when applied to the whole class of all organic languages, all of which are intimately allied to

one another, and which form throughout the dialects of the most different nations only one grand family of tongues, the sole question can be, which of them is most organically formed, which least have lost this structure, and have most preserved that character in simple regularity. By this standard we can easily distribute into different classes of approximation the collective organically-formed languages. This, too, without wishing to find out, with positive certainty in useless efforts or from one-sided partiality, the common parent and radical language itself, as it was spoken in the land of Eri, or in any other primeval country after the last catastrophe in nature. According to the present state of our actual knowledge of language, both in comparative grammar and historically-founded etymology, there belong to the first class of approximation to the organic primitive or parental language, the Sanscrit or Old-Indian, in particular, together with the Latin, and also the Greek. I must observe here, that our philologists of classical antiquity, who have gone into those investigations, consider the Latin as merely allied, but at the same time an elder form of the Greek. The Persian, and with it all the German and Gothic languages, form then a second class. The Slavonic tongues, whether more profound judges wish to place them in the first or second class, belong in every case to the organic kind. To this family the Arabico-Syriac tongues appertain only in a remoter degree, and with many modifications. Now where the Zend language is to be placed in this series, and to which class it belongs, is, from the materials extant, not easy to decide with certainty. This will be especially the case, so long as we know so little of what is the most important, its grammar and construction, so as to be able to come to a decision respecting its organic constitution and formation.

The author mentions several times its close affinity to the Indian language, and appears even to consider it as a mere dialect of the latter. Now the first question is, whether this affinity is a very close and original one, or merely one more remote; which, indeed, may be asserted also of ten or twenty other languages. I wish to decide nothing here, but merely start doubts, and mention the reasons on both sides from what has been given. Of the little that is known concerning the construction and grammar of the Zend language, Anquetil



himself has adduced some extremely remarkable analogies in the declension to the Georgian language (in the Caucasian country); some of it coincides with Indian forms. Even in the alphabet of the Zend language there is much that is peculiar; for instance, in the great number of the letters, in the special character of the long vowels, the including the nasal AN among the latter, the annexing of the letter *u* to other consonants, which reminds us of the construction of the Indian system of writing, and is only found again in this language. In the Zend dictionary, published by Anquetil, there is a considerable number of words undeniably Indian; and with a more complete knowledge of the latter language, with greater means for acquiring it than I possess, perhaps many more would be found, without giving way to any uncertain conjectures. A considerable number of these words are such as express the first and most common wants. They are also in their form, and in the changes they undergo, perfectly similar to the Indian; though for the most part, with such exception, the termination and formation of words in the Zend language appear very peculiar and different. Some others are technical words from the Sanscrit, which have passed over almost wholly unchanged; they bear less the character of roots originally common to both, than of technical words borrowed from the other; among them, in particular, some metaphysical ones are remarkable,\* because they might lead to suppositions concerning the connection or mutual influence of the doctrine and the system. That the Zend language belongs to the mixed ones, appears also to be confirmed by the dictionary, from the circumstance that it contains, together with the words of Indian affinity, so large a number in common with the Pehlvi language, this too quite independent of the religious terms. Now should it be asserted that all these words were first adopted by the Pehlvi from the Zend, this would be deciding the question before the investigation. Among the religious words of the Zoroastrian books only a very few can be positively shown to be allied to the Indian; if, therefore, the Zend were really an Indian dialect, we should be obliged far rather to regard

\* The much spoken of *zervane akerene*, boundless time, in the Zend books, might perhaps be nothing but the Indian *Sarvam akhyaran*—*omne indivisum*, or *indivisible*, the *πάν και ἕν* of the Vedanta doctrine.

these words as originally belonging to the Pehlvi. It is certainly not a little singular, that while the Pehlvi language and the use of it is sufficiently confirmed in the old Persian kingdom by inscriptions and coins, the Zend language is entirely destitute of this virtual confirmation. There is also something remarkable in the dictionary that belongs to this place; namely, the totally different names for several cardinal numbers, which is usually a characteristic peculiarity of mixed languages, as in the Coptic for instance, the duplicate, partly old Egyptian, partly Grecian names for the first numerals.\* Should now the Zend language, as it has become known to us, be a mixed dialect of more recent origin, we should most naturally have to look for its seat in the north-western frontier regions of India, where then most clearly that land, extending far and wide between India and Persia from Little Thibet, called by the ancient name of Sind, and which is given to the whole fluvial district of the Indus (qui incolis Sindus appellatus), offers in the very name even a coincidence. It is not, it must be confessed, an entirely complete one; since the initial consonant, though very similar in sound, is carefully discriminated in the notation of the Oriental languages. Nevertheless the analogy is no more removed entirely than the higher signification of the word Zend, which means living, in the sense that the Zend people were such. It implies, that they, by the recognition of the true light, alone veritably lived; and that the Zend books are those in which this doctrine of the true life is described and revealed, &c. &c. There are too many examples in Asiatic antiquity, that a higher signification and consecration have been thus given to the real name of a

\* Thus besides its *drei* (three) and *thretim* (third), exactly as in the Indo-Latin-German family, there is also for the same number three, the word *se* as in the Pehlvi, and then the exotic word *teschro* entirely foreign to the others. Moreover, *peantche* (five), as in the Indian and Persian, *desé* (for ten), just as in the family of tongues above alluded to; but then, quite independent of these, *pokhdé* (five), and *mro* (ten), together with the Indo-Latin *deux* (two), there is also *besch* (two), corresponding to the Latin *bis*; and this root is remarkable in the form *betim* (second), which is also allied to the German *beid-e* (both). The Zend word *tchetvers* (four) is connected with several languages, as *chatur*, Ind.; *quatuor*, Lat.; *tschetyr*, Slav. Many of these numerals in the Zend dictionary are connected with the Indo-Latin-Persian-German family; nevertheless *schouasch* (six) seems to be entirely foreign.

geographically defined land by means of a religious allusion, or that the consecrated name has been also transferred and lastingly attached to the actual land. That which, however, decides against this supposition, is the circumstance that nothing whatever is found of a Zend language and a Zend people in the definitive historical sense in the sources, neither in the Zoroastrian, nor in the new Persian ones that are founded on old tradition, and on documents. The Zend is always used in the symbolico-religious sense, for designating the true "life" of those possessing the right knowledge, the doctrine of Zoroaster, and of still older masters; their revelation of this life, and also for signalizing the supporters of it, or the participants in the revelation of the true life. This entire question of the relationship of the so-called Zend language, and a judgment concerning its construction, cannot be formed satisfactorily, till we possess a grammar of it. Then, perhaps, all these doubts, which I only produce as such, will be perhaps cleared up, and the so-called Zend language may preserve and justify, according to the views of the author, its full rank as a primitively old and original language closely related to the Indian. Independently of this, it is self-evident, from the whole context, that Zoroaster's doctrine and books were diffused among several nations, that belonged to the great Persian empire, were, consequently, also translated with great probability into several languages. Nothing disadvantageous for the genuineness of the tradition ensues, in whatever language the fragments may happen to have been preserved. The sense of documents, regarded as holy, is not easily corrupted essentially by pure translation; but, on the other hand, it is seriously endangered by any intentional alteration. Together with the grammar, nothing would be so desirable, as the original copy or impression of the whole, or at all events of a considerable portion of the text in the original language; for the few verses, which have been communicated to us (see Kleuker's *Zendavesta*, ii. p. 48), disclose to us alone far more than many individual words. Now, among these verses, there are decidedly some entire phrases very closely allied to the Indian, nay, some sound exactly similar.

The calling it the Zend language, usual and general as it has become, appears for the rest, judging by everything mentioned above, to be not much more appropriate than if we

were to call the language of the Mosaic books the Thora language, or the Hellenic dialect of the New Testament, the gospel language. We must inquire after the people who spoke this language, and so let us now turn from these remarks concerning the primitive language, and the language of the Zoroastrian books, as the connection of the subject naturally leads us, to what the author adduces respecting the primitive people and the Zend people, their original native seat, as likewise their migrations from this primitive country into other regions upon the evidence and authority of the Zoroastrian books.—“The Zend people,” he quotes from one of them (p. 21), “dwelt” (in the happy primeval period before the existence of winter and the migrations into warmer lower districts) “in the land of Eri, Ari.”—The name of “Zend people,” I do not find in the passage quoted; but the question is concerning the first people and human race, according to the doctrine of these books and this tradition. Now, how was this race or nation called, or what people was it, that inhabited the land of Ari? The ancients named them, after the land itself, the people of the Arians. There is no doubt that the land Eriene is identical with the province Aria, or Ariana, of the Greeks, the modern Chorasán. I refer for the last assertion to the judgment of a learned friend, whose authority in everything connected with Persian antiquities is of the greatest and acknowledged value, the Aulic counsellor, Von Hammer, who has had the kindness to communicate to me his opinion upon this point, but who at the same time remarked, that also Ver, which in the Shah-name is called Iran, must by no means be confounded with Persis. The city, however, of Ver-ene, cannot be Persepolis, as Anquetil very truly asserts, but is the Hekatompylos of the Greeks, the capital of ancient Parthia; the Albordi is the mountain range in Chorasán, in a more extended sense, however, the whole mountain chain from Caucasus to the Himalaya. The province Aria is also, no doubt, a mountainous highland country, such as Eriene is described, and the streams which water Bactria and Sogdiana partly descend from the Paropamisus. This exactly agrees with the passage which the author cites (p. 25). For the rest Aria may have had, in the historical sense even, a greater importance and extent than the limitation and site

which are assigned to this province in the geographical system of the Greeks. A Grecian author himself speaks (see Creuzer, *Symbol.* vol. i. p. 698, note 40, and p. 736, note 90) of "the whole Arian race" (*παν το Αρειον γένος*), as of a great and widely-diffused people. In the Indian code of Menu, an almost unmeasured extent, through the Indian northern mountains, as far as the East and West seas, is assigned to Ariaverta, the land of the Arians.

Let us now remember, that the Medes from the most ancient times were called Arians, *i.e.* that the Medes were a people of the "great Arian race," and that they assumed the Median name at a later period. Much that was hitherto dark and inexplicable now suddenly becomes clear. We need no longer reject the positive historical evidence, that Zoroaster was a Mede, while the Zend books constantly allude to Eeriene, since the apparent contradiction ceases to exist. What we have hitherto called the Zend language, would, perhaps, in accordance with what those Zoroastrian sources themselves reveal concerning the real original land and race where this doctrine obtained, be more appropriately recognized and considered as the Arian language, or if it be preferred, as the East-Median in opposition to the West-Median Pehlvi language. This, however, is supposing what has hitherto been termed the Zend language, and which we define as the Arian, should turn out, upon a more intimate knowledge of it, to be an old original language, and not a mixed dialect of more recent origin. The name, too, of this great Arian people, is very remarkable. The Indian root, *Ari*, which derivation seems to be the best, signifies something admirable and distinguished, glorious, that which is "egregium." A warlike, heroic people is always inclined to give itself epithets of a like nature, and in this sense. Thus the other West-Median name, *Pehlavan*, signifies a hero. The Persians called their heroic ancestors *Artæans*, which name has some resemblance to that of the Arians, but to which we by no means wish to ascribe any etymological value. Derived from an entirely different root, but with a similar allusion and meaning in the name, may be added to the instances just given the neighbouring people of the Aspians, on the eastern slope of the Paropamisus, towards the Indus. It is not difficult to explain this word, for since

*aspa*, *asp* means in the Indian and the Persian, as also in the Zend or Ari, a horse, the transition (as in the Homeric *ἵπποτα*) is here easily found. Warlike, horse-compelling nations have been often called, or call themselves, by a popular name of this description, and as in this instance. I, however, have introduced the name of Aspian people here, because that wide-spread appellation, *asp*, so constantly occurs in the old generic names of the Zoroastrian books, and the Median-Persian heroic saga, which is certainly deserving of attention. The name of Arians is allied too in another way, which much more immediately concerns us. That Indian root, Ari, is decidedly and indisputably a German one also, actually existing in the language, and still obtaining in life, if we can speak in this manner of "Ehre" (honour). According to our analogy of language, and to the present form of this root, that popular name would be tantamount as it were to the honours, that is, the honourable, the noble. Precisely in this way the West German tribes were named "Erben" (heirs), or "Wehren" (defenders), as conveying the idea of free inhabitants of the land and men wearing arms, with the right to do so; this name, indeed, was applied to the whole people. In the earlier and Gothic form that root was similarly pronounced in German, *ari*, or *ario*. All those who have attentively observed how widely spread and how prevalent this root, *ari*, or *ario*, is, in the old German history and mythic tradition, among so many heroic and generic names, and elsewhere, will not be surprised when I add, that I have for a long time entertained the historical supposition, and for which I have found confirmation from many sources, that we should seek for our German ancestors while they were still in Asia, especially under the name of Arians; or to express it more appropriately, with the Greeks, as cited above, under "the whole great Arian family." By this means the old saga and opinion relative to the relationship of the Germans, or German and Gothic tribes, with the Persians, would all at once receive a totally new light, and a definite historical point of connection. To the circumstance, that some German roots and words, striking from their complete similarity, are found in the dictionary of the Zend, or, as I would now prefer saying, Ari language, I will not attach any further importance, because resemblances and pecu-

liarities of this sort are often seen among nations very remote from and entirely unconnected with each other. That Chovaresm, also, according to Mirchond (see Hammer's History of Persian Arts of Speech, p. 137), was once called Germania, striking as it is when compared with what Herodotus mentions of an old Persian race of Germans, as one of the three agricultural tribes (see Hammer's remark as paged above), we will not yet deem as conclusive, since the similarity of the name may be accidental, like as the seeming resemblance of the name to the Indian Samanreans, which means something quite different, and denotes the votaries of Buddha, as opposed to the followers of Brahma. The more especially so, since the name of Germans, so widely diffused since, arose much later on the Western Roman frontier of Old Saxony, as is evidenced historically and undeniably. But I do regard as far more remarkable, that Bokhara, according to Mirchond (see Hammer as cited above), "in the language of the ancient Magi," means the gathering-place of the sciences, and that in Ulfilas, as is well known, Bokareis should mean a learned man. I do not pretend to deny that I do certainly consider myself warranted in regarding the land of Chovaresm and Bokhara as the first historically known dwelling-place, shown at least to be probable, of our Teutonic ancestors in Asia. During the course of my observations respecting the Arian people and their name, I did not confine myself solely to the threads of the etymological relationship of language, and to the delight of weaving these any longer; no, something else results from the investigation, which in another respect also is historically very important. Nothing, in fact, is so essential, or throws so much light on researches touching an ancient people (I speak of those Asiatic and European ones, who have a tradition and traces of an olden culture), as first of all to ascertain whether it was a priest-people, as the Indians, Egyptians, Etrurians, or a warrior-people, that is, a people founded by the warrior-caste, or where this latter preserved its pre-eminence. Not that the warrior nations had no priests, and we know that the priestly nations, named above, had their war-caste also; it is the dominant element that we must regard. We leave out of consideration here the trading nations, and generally all those, where any other third element, except the two named, has produced the

dominant character in all the institutions of life. The two chief classes in the whole of the ancient world, as known to us, are formed by the sacerdotal nations, and by the warlike nations of heroes or nobles. The last are mostly, or at all events very frequently, designated as such by their very names. Thus in the present day robber tribes in India, addicted to war, have denominations of this nature, for the Mahrattas (great Rajahs) and the Rappoots (sons of the Rajahs) are such, and derived from the war-caste. A similar signification is conveyed by the two most comprehensive names of the old German tribes: Teutons, that is, Thuidans, which in the Gothic means kings, princes, masters, lords; and Goths, that is, nobles (as Gothakunds of noble descent). Now precisely in this way the old Medes were called Pehlvan, that is, heroes, as then it is certain the Medes of Zoroaster were a noble heroic nation of this description. The name of Arians means the same, from whom the Medes descended, as we explained above from the Indian root the signification of this name, and proved it even in the old German language.

The old institution of castes, to which we have been led in the course of the investigation, is touched upon by the author as cursorily (p. 49) as it is unsatisfactory. His opinion is, that they proceeded from a distribution and parcelling out of the Indian races that took place originally at the first immigration; but he offers us, in point of fact, no materials for pursuing this branch of inquiry further with him. To be able to do this, it would be requisite for us to know, in the first place, whether he considers the institution of castes as old, and, in its first outlines at least, antediluvian, or completed immediately after the great catastrophe; or whether he deems it modern, and not founded till after the origin of nations and states. As for the description of the confused and parcelled-out condition of the Indians, we do not know where the author derived his reasons from. One thing is at least certain, that his views of the Indians themselves are destitute of all clearness and precision. Considering the number of sources, and the chronology that is not historical, from which we have never thoroughly disengaged ourselves during the Indian investigations, considering also the conflicting opinions of the learned in Europe on this subject and others, this is not difficult to understand, so long as there is a



want of a critical support and historical prop for enabling us to arrange and dispose the whole. The one grand contradiction, however, that prevails throughout Indian tradition and collective literature, namely, between the religion of Brahma and the doctrine of Buddha, which even the Greeks in Alexander's time found there, in the two sects or religious parties of the Bramins and the Samanæans, may certainly be historically cleared up and explained away. This fact, which has altered and split up everything in India, and in the people who, in their mental culture, are, or were, dependent on India, forms now that very historical support by means of which light and order first pervade the whole, as I shall attempt to show in another place.\*

The question, too, concerning the primitive state, and how it was constituted, about which Hüllman has given us lately such interesting inquiries, has been quite neglected by the author, although he so carefully endeavours to ascertain the entire primitive condition both in religion and language, as also with respect to the land originally inhabited by the first human race. This omission of the state, in his investigations, may be perhaps less regretted, since he seems not to have as yet perceived the proper point for commencing them from. Here, before all things, it would be incumbent to solve and decide the question, so important in many respects, whether the different ranks—that is, in the old world—whether the castes, in short, were older, or whether the state was. I use

\* In what relates to the objections which the author has advanced in his former work ("On the Age and Value of some Oriental Records") against the genuineness and age of Menu's Indian Code already alluded to further back, with respect to Sir W. Jones's and my declaration in the treatise on the language and wisdom of the Indians; I will simply remark here on this occasion, that those objections are in so far well founded, that the question cannot be at all, whether this work first proceeded from Menu, since the contrary is proved by the work itself. The judgment of Sir W. Jones was principally founded on the antiquity of the language, and when I at that time subscribed to the judgment and great authority of Jones on this point, I for the present, and until further reasons be adduced, see no grounds for not doing so still. I grant that it is nothing but a relatively great age, that can be concluded on from the antiquity of the language; but that the Indian Code of Menu, notwithstanding this great limitation of the supposed great age, may well be a source of no mean importance for old tradition and historical knowledge, the author himself seems to recognize, since he on several occasions resorts to and uses it as such.

the word "state" in its proper signification, as a peace-institution guaranteed by the power of war, and which, although it is at the same time founded on internal peace, is nevertheless immediately directed to external peace or war; and although of mutable circumference or extent, has nevertheless, as a moral individual thing, its boundaries strictly closed against everything external. In point of fact, the universal and favourite expression of "primitive people" is not correct, if we, as the author in the main decidedly does, take our departure from the unity of descent; for in that case there can be no question of a primitive people, but only of a primitive or original stock, from which all nations are derived, and by which we mean therefore nothing but the condition of mankind that obtained before the distribution of man into nations, and previous to the origin of any individual people. They, it is true, who do not take their departure from one common descent, but assume that man has sprung forth everywhere from the earth, differently fashioned according to the different nature of the country, are on the other hand quite right in their sense of the term when they speak of primitive races in the plural number, since they refuse to acknowledge the primitively historical unity, and will not allow it to have ever existed. Now with the author, who manifestly gives the preference to the system of unity, and who endeavours to show, how all nations emigrated and are descended from one primeval land (the central high land of Asia), it is therefore only an inconsistency when he also speaks at times (pp. 48 and 52) of primitive peoples, that are said to have preserved themselves here and there in the deep valleys of the great range of lofty mountains, like a genus of animals in solitary districts, that has indeed grown scarce, but which is still found. If we do not mistake, he has borrowed this opinion from Ritter, in other respects a very excellent geographical writer, who is, however, still something touched with that hypothesis of Antiochthones. This, too, notwithstanding the wealth, so genially amassed by himself, of ethnographic facts and remarks, in his grand arranged outlines, leads us palpably and evidently back to an original unity of all nations derived from the three main parent stocks.

If we now return to the primeval land of Eeriene, as it is

designated in the *Zendavesta*, it is manifest, by the mode in which the other countries are adjoined to it and ranged in a line around it, that it is used in a sense perfectly historically defined, and bounded with geographical accuracy. It is at the same time set down in the midst of other countries as the parent land of the Arian people, as the main land of their origin. Now, according to the author's own rule, we must carefully discriminate before all things in every old historical tradition the Universal from what is special, nationally peculiar and geographically local. Thus, in the *Zend saga*, for instance, *Jemjid* is a connecting point of this description with the Universal, since *Shem*, not only in this tradition, but also in the *Mosaic* and other Asiatic ones, takes so important a place in the derivation and history of the descent of nations. Afterwards there are some more detached but valuable indications, as for instance, a very beautiful indication is contained in that myth of the nine human pairs, who wandered across the sea; consequently, as the author explains it (pp. 54 and 55), may have, perhaps, first peopled Africa. Everything, however, seems to be local in the geographical views given of the world and various lands in the *Zendavesta*. First of all, *Eeriene*, or the *Ari land*, is accurately defined the original country of the *Arians*, the precise *Aria* of the ancients. Among the fifteen blessed regions and spots that are ranged around this centre, the first are evidently, and without a shadow of doubt, *Sogdiana* and *Bactria*. Among those that follow, many are doubtful and capable of being explained in more ways than one. Though they are not situated to the south of that centre in a geographical sense, they may, nevertheless, in a climatical sense, as valleys and low lands, be described as warmer ones in comparison with the old mountainous seat of nativity,—the cradle of the race. The eastern provinces are very conspicuous; namely, the *Sind* regions of *Cabool* and *Lahore*, or the *Punjaub*; after them, *Candahar* also, the *Arachosia* of the ancients, and the country near the river *Hindmend*. The design of the drawer-up of the old record was, perhaps, less directed to the representing of "the whole great Arian family of nations" in their common descent, which at all events was certainly not his only object. It seems far more probable to have been his intention at the same time to comprehend and describe, in his

geographical views of the earth, the great Median empire also, which coming after the Assyrian, preceded the Persian in its greatest extent, inclusive not only of the nations and countries that formed it, but also of those by which it was bounded. It is remarkable in this geographical description, that according to the more correct interpretation of Ver and Verene, as alluded to further back, Persis is given quite as little as Babylonia, or Susiana. Of Assyria, too, only the most northerly part, on the confines of Armenia, is introduced in a very ambiguous way, but no mention is made of it in its higher sense of the Assyrian empire. The extreme frontier of this great extent, as designated in that description, is formed towards the west by Armenia; that is to say, if the sixteenth blessed region, Rengheiao,\* in Pehlvi Arvestanove, is rightly explained as the northern portion of Assyria contiguous to Armenia. (Kleuker, vol. ii. p. 303.) From what has been here advanced, it appears now evidently to follow, that this geographical description in the Zendavesta is neither an Assyro-Babylonian, nor a Persian (taken from the empire as founded by Cyrus), but most decidedly a Median one. If this point could be regarded as certain, then much light would be thrown upon the whole, notwithstanding great difficulty and obscurity still hang over isolated parts. It would be very desirable if some learned men, provided with all the proper sources that explain the ancient geography of Asia, and deeply versed in Oriental languages, would thoroughly explain this entire Median list of countries, such as it is found in the Vendidad (Fargard, i., in Kleuker, part ii. pp. 299, 304), from which the author, Mr. Rhode, only selects what best corresponds to his hypothesis. Then a definite judgment could be come to, whether there was any reason for assuming a twofold and double Ari land and Eerience. One, according to the author, is the first and original native country of the Arians in the north or north-west part of Sogdiana; but which as yet is mere hypothesis. The other is the main central land of the Median empire, founded by the parent stock of the Arians, namely, the Aria of the ancients, and which is both historically and geographically certain. Towards the north-west this Medo-Arian descrip-

\* According to Görre, in his translation just published of the *Schahname*, Introd. p. xlix., Rengheiao is the province Zarangia, Sarang.

tion in the Zendavesta extends, as already observed, in no case further than up to Armenia, or as far as the north part of Assyria. The other terminal point towards the south-east is, on the other hand, more clearly defined. It is formed by the fifteenth blessed region, Hapte Heands, or the seven Indias, respecting which the record adds, remarkably enough, that this blissful region "surpasses all the other kingdoms of the world in size and extent." This very circumstance obliges us to regard the compilation of these books as having taken place in the neighbourhood of India, for only near the spot could so distinct and complete an idea have been formed of the greatness, population, and importance of this region of the globe. The Arian race, however, is also described in an Indian source, quite clearly in my eyes, as closely allied to the Indian, both by descent and language. In that often-discussed passage of Menu's code (criticised in the author's other work, "On the Age and Value of some Oriental Records," p. 64), where the question regards the alienation from the Bramins, the neglect of Braminical manners and usages, the warrior-castes that had thrown off the yoke of civilization, and the nations that sprang from them, it says at the conclusion, "All these are Dasyus (or predatory tribes living in a state of war), whether they speak the language of the Mlecchas, or that of the Aryas." The Mlecchas are barbarian tribes, alien to the Indians, both in race and language. Now since these are mentioned in evident contradistinction to the Arians, it is tantamount to saying, they are all savage and desperate robber tribes, whether they are barbarians, or even Arians, the latter being actually allied to the Indians both in race and language.

Now, if the author takes his Eeriene historically in a far more extended sense than the Zendavesta does, and regards it as the whole of the primitive land after the Flood, therefore the central high land of Asia, no objection in this respect is to be made. Only he ought then to remain steadfast to this comprehensive view of his, and not limit it again himself in a partial manner. For it is self-evident, that in the primitively historical tradition of each nation, according to the particular locality, the point situated nearest to that nation has the greatest importance assigned to it. The author himself grants the possibility, that the Caucasus may have formed

“a second asylum” (p. 29), and that, generally speaking, there may have been “more than one primitive land” (p. 28). We should prefer giving at once to *one* primitive land a greater extent, and not confining it within such narrow limits. It must also not be overlooked, into what wide regions of the earth one and the same name for vast mountains and countries, in the old world, was often applied and extended. The name of the Caucasus gives us an instance of this, so likewise of the Imaus, and lastly of Asia itself. If, therefore, the Himalaya and the Hindukush lie nearest the Indian (p. 24), and are especially named before all others in the Indian tradition; if the Altai (p. 52) forms the pivot, as it were, for the first immigration of the North-Asiatic tribes, and the Ural designs the great, old national way (p. 53) to the west, that is, to northern and central Europe; so Moses also ought not to be passed over with such indifference, because he makes the patriarch Noah rest with the ark on Mount Ararat. Each tradition, as we see, refers on the whole but to one and the same central high land, and to one primeval Asiatic mountain-chain, in all its wide ramifications. If Anquetil’s opinion were the right one, which places Eerene at the foot of the Albordi, in the land that is watered by the Kur and Araxes, the declaration of the Zendavesta, according to this interpretation, would then agree very closely with that of Moses. From what was quoted and examined into further back, this explanation relative to Eerene cannot well be admitted; but an agreement so very accurate and precise is neither to be expected nor sought for in this case. Nevertheless, where the explaining of ancient geography is coupled with so much doubt, and where the best opinion is for the most part only the more probable one, this ought to make us diffident, and not too eager, for the sake of a pre-conceived opinion, to reject any old Asiatic tradition, how much less, then, the Mosaic document.

With this remark we conclude this communication respecting the work of the author. It has, perhaps, been too lengthily drawn up. Should I have succeeded in producing a conviction in his mind, that Moses and the Genesis may be, after all, regarded also in another and different point of view from what he has hitherto done, I should rejoice, if my expectations on this score should be not deceived, or be even

surpassed. In every case my design was to examine thoroughly and seriously, excluding all partiality from the primitively-historical inquiry; to show, also, that what is only too frequently represented as entirely separate or even contradictory, when rightly understood, agrees perfectly well together. Lastly, it is indeed high time that the two witnesses of the living truth and clear knowledge of antiquity, viz. "writ and nature," should no longer be used and misused in mutual opposition, that they should lie, dead for all more exalted knowledge, neglected in the lane, abandoned to the scorn of ignorant understanding. The moment has visibly arrived when they shall rise again victoriously, as loud witnesses of the divine truth so long misunderstood, to the greater and ever greater glorification of that truth both in science and in life. It is doing but a sorry service to religion, or rather to both, when we put religion in opposition to science, to which this esoterical branch of history also so essentially belongs. Now if, in this first attempt at a profounder understanding of this subject, much should be still found that will be, perhaps, "a stumbling-block to the Jews, and to the Greeks a foolishness," as all that is conceived in a Christian manner with science for the most part is, I nevertheless know that this way, which I have attempted to point out here, will be more and more recognized, and more universally perfected, because it is the right one.

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